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Artists turn out 'for a special friend'

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Monday, September 20, 2004 ★★ 76 pages / 5 sections / vol. 19 / no. 285 P18 website: www.inq7.net

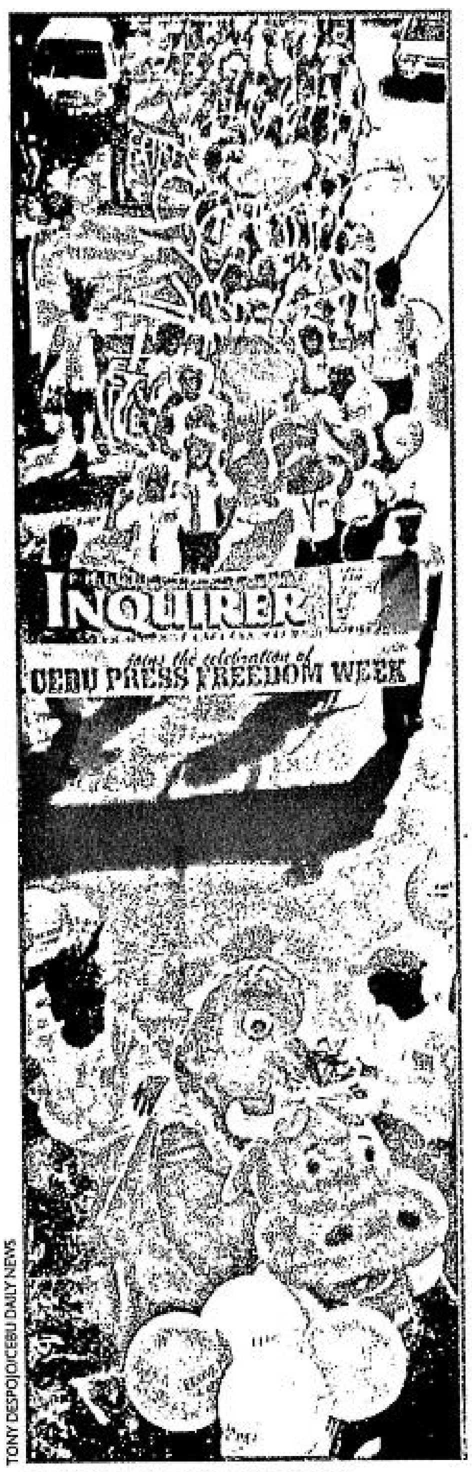
Militant lawmakers decry cut in their pork barrel

By Carlito Pablo

SIX MILITANT party-list representatives, whose voices were the loudest in calling for the abolition of the graft-ridden pork barrel, are in fact among those scared of losing their share of the lard from the pantry.

Representatives Satur Ocampo, Teodoro

MILITANT/ A22



TONY DESPOJO/CEBU DAILY NEWS

PRESS FREEDOM MARCH
INQUIRER mascot Guyito and Cebu Daily News' Siloy win for the sister publications the liveliest, most colorful and "Star of the Parade" awards during the celebration of the 10th Cebu Press Freedom Week in Cebu City.

Banks owe gov't ₱38B in back taxes

Foreign currency loans next focus of tax drive

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

FOREIGN and domestic banks owe the cash-strapped government a total of P38 billion in back taxes and penalties on their foreign currency loans, making them the next target of the Arroyo administration's campaign against tax evaders, according to the chair of the House committee on economic affairs.

Albay Rep. Joey Salceda told the INQUIRER yesterday that the Bureau of Internal Revenue had already agreed to extend up to June this year the payment by domestic banks and offshore banking units (OBUs) of their back taxes on their foreign currency deposit unit (FCDU) loans released from 1998 to 2004.

Salceda said the BIR expected to collect on these taxes unless a compromise deal was reached soon.

The revenue agency has claimed that Philippine banks and branches of foreign banks are subject to the gross receipts tax (GRT), documentary stamp tax (DST) and branch profit tax since 1997 when the Comprehensive Tax Reform Package (CTRP) was approved.

The CTRP revoked the tax-exempt status of FCDU loans. The exemption was restored through Republic Act No. 9294 on April 28, 2004.

FCDU accounts represent the foreign currency-denominated deposits of Filipinos, usually overseas workers, and foreigners.

But the Bankers Association of the Philippines (BAP) is disputing the BIR's computation of the back taxes.

"It would be the court that

BANKS/ A9

A DOS Palmas resort diver guides tourists to a coral bed where colorful fish abound near Arreceffi Island in Palawan, which is now largely patronized by South Korean honeymooners.

AFP

Koreans revive resort laid low by terror

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—With neat, thatched-roof cottages perched on stilts above crystal-clear water and white sandy beaches, the Dos Palmas resort on the island of Arreceffi is a picture of tranquility.

Located on this tiny outcrop off the coast of Palawan island, the resort was once the favorite haunt of the local elite.

But paradise was lost three years ago when a group of al-Qaida-linked Abu Sayyaf gunmen raided the resort and seized 20 tourists, including three Americans, in an attack that stunned the nation and sent the country's tourism industry into a tailspin.

A speedboat carried off the terrified hostages across the Sulu Sea to Basilan Island, some 580 km to the southeast, where many of the Filipino hostages were ransomed off after protracted negotiations. But two of the Americans died in captivity and the third was recovered more than a year later in a military operation.

For the 48-room resort, the attack crippled business and forced Dos Palmas to close its doors toward the end of 2001 for six months.

Three years on, the tiny resort has sprung back to life—thanks mainly to South Koreans chasing the sun and sand.

The Dos Palmas management noticed that while most foreigners shunned the Philippines after the Abu Sayyaf raid, the kidnapping did not

KOREANS/ A22

Unrest scenario over new taxes may be alarmist

By Amando Doronila

ANALYSIS

THE PULSE Asia survey of June 22 to July 3 shows that 78 percent of Filipinos "disagree with the imposition of new or increased taxes as a first option and would rather see government cut wasteful spending due to inefficiency and corruption."

About four out of 10 Filipinos (39 percent) believe, as the first option, that the government should improve tax collection, instead of imposing news taxes, according to the survey. Thirty percent say they would not oppose new taxes if this would lead to the improvement in the quality of government services.

UNREST/ A9

SUSUGAL BA TAYO SA PLANONG ITO?!

Lawmaker urges legalized 'jueteng' to ease fiscal crisis

By Frank Cimatu
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—The government could easily earn P12 billion a year if "jueteng" were legalized, according to a Cordillera lawmaker who is also pushing for a synchronized and computerized drawing of winners thrice daily.

Mt. Province Rep. Victor Dominguez said he was not afraid of the backlash that met

LAWMAKER/ A20

PNP task force targets political armies in Abra

By Artha Kira Paredes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BANGUED, Abra—Philippine National Police Director General Edgar Aglipay has ordered a new task force to dismantle all partisan or private armed groups (PAGs) in Abra.

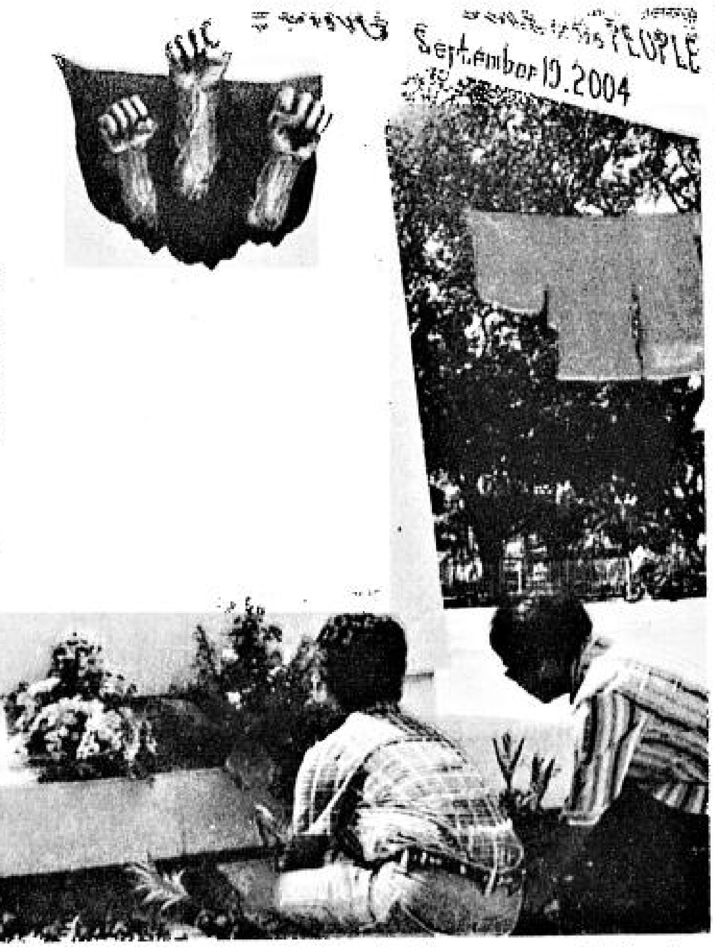
Reacting to an INQUIRER exposé detailing how assassination squads had been formed in the province, Aglipay ordered Task Force Abra to monitor the local peace and order situation.

He also offered to mediate the feud among factions of the Cordillera People's Liberation Army (CPLA), after supporters of slain CPLA founder Conrado Balweg threatened to break a 17-year-old peace agreement with the government.

The Regional Peace and Order Council placed the CPLA on its surveillance list because of the upsurge in well-armed political groups being hired by Cordillera politicians.

Miguel Sugguiyao, chief of staff of the CPLA faction allied with Balweg, said the government's refusal to complete its integration plan for the rebel group had prompted them to set a Sept. 13 deadline before they broke the agreement that was signed by Balweg and

PNP TASK FORCE/ A9



NESTOR P. BURGOS/PDI VISAYAS BUREAU

RELATIVES of victims of martial law, which the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos declared 32 years ago, light candles and offer flowers in memory of their loved ones before a new monument at the Plaza Libertad in Iloilo City.

Monument honors victims of martial law

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—A tearful Faustina Caro, 71, slowly made her way to the monument and lit two candles, one each for her husband Valeriano and son Rolito.

Valeriano, chair of the farmers' group Katilingban sang Mangunguma sa Isla sang Panay (Kamipa) and a prominent figure in the anti-Marcos protests, was 60 when he and Rolito, 22, were gunned down by a team of soldiers and militiamen on Oct. 3, 1987, in their home in Oton town, Iloilo.

No one has been arrested for the killings.

"I still dream of justice after all these years," Faustina said in Hiligaynon after offering a short prayer.

She was among 200 former political detainees, human rights activists, and relatives and friends of martial law victims present at yesterday's unveiling and blessing of a monument dedicated to those who died fighting the dictatorship.

They lit candles and offered flowers as the engraved names of around 360 mar-

MONUMENT/ A20

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms in the afternoon or evening.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY D.J. YAP, PDI RESEARCH/09/20/04

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

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Second FRONT PAGE

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DOF backs ₱1-₱2 cigarette tax hike

By Carlito Pablo

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance has endorsed proposals in Congress to increase taxes on cigarettes by P1 to P2 per pack in a bid to plug loopholes in revenue collections on these so-called "sin products."

A P2 per pack increase in taxes on cigarettes is expected to raise P9 billion in additional revenues for the cash-strapped government which is teetering on the brink of a fiscal crisis.

The DOF made the endorsement in a hearing last week by the House ways and means committee which will also tackle adjustments to the taxes of other sin products such as tobacco and liquor, after wrapping up deliberations on the proposed tax amnesty bill.

4-tiered system

Rep. Marcelino Libanan (NPC, Eastern Samar) noted that the government was losing revenues in the current four-tiered system for tobacco products in which taxes varied per price bracket.

This means that under the current system, the lower the price of a cigarette brand, the lower is its tax. This has resulted in the proliferation of cheaply priced cigarette brands.

Shift to cheaper brands

"It can be readily seen that the current system has resulted in a shift of consumption to lower priced brands and has predictably encouraged manufacturers to introduce brands that would fall under the lower tax classification," Libanan said.

Libanan is the author of House Bill No. 2733 which seeks to slap a uniform P1 per pack tax on all cigarette products.

"With a unit specific increase uniformly applied across all tiers, the government will capture all incremental revenues despite possible changes in consumption patterns in favor of the low tax tier brands," Libanan said.

Rep. Crispin Remulla (NP, Cavite) has proposed a higher tax of P2 per pack.

Uniform increase

The P2 per pack tax increase is contained in Remulla's House Bill No. 2871 which provides that a uniform tax increase would discourage further consumption shifts in favor of low tax brands.

"Government will surely collect the incremental value of P2 per pack notwithstanding any down trading which may persist," Remulla said.

Automatic hikes

Remulla noted that with the country's current consumption volume of 4.5 billion packs of cigarettes per year, the P2 tax would result in additional revenues of P9 billion.

The Libanan and Remulla bills also provide for automatic increases in tax rates every two years based on inflation-adjusted average tax rates.

DOF officials led by Finance Undersecretary Grace Tan told members of the House ways and means committee that the adoption of a uniform tax on all tobacco products was consistent with the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control.

Effective deterrent

The FCTC is an international treaty, to which the Philippines is a signatory, that was crafted by the World Health Organization.

The FCTC treaty noted that price and tax measures are an effective and important means of reducing tobacco consumption, particularly among young persons.

New GOCC execs must waive perks—Mitra

By Carlito Pablo

NEW APPOINTEES to government-owned and -controlled corporations and government financial institutions must be required to sign waivers against additional perks for themselves, a congressman urged yesterday.

Rep. Abraham Mitra (LP, Palawan) proposed to Malacañang the adoption of the measure to rein in the financial excesses of executives in GOCCs and GFIs.

Mitra also recommended the publication in newspapers of the new salaries of the so-called "fat cats" in compliance with President Macapagal-Arroyo's Administrative Order No. 103.

"Applicants for board seats in state firms should sign a vow renouncing more perks during their tenure and to keep benefits within the limits set by President Arroyo," Mitra said.

He said this "promissory note to save" should be a prerequisite for appointment.

"There should be a perks holiday," Mitra said. "After all, these are not the Soroses or the Gates of the world but mostly people who are asking for post-election backpay."

For instance, Mitra wondered if appointees to the Government Service Insurance System who replaced Estrada appointees last July 1 had slashed their benefits.

Another congressman also trained his sights on the GSIS.

Rep. Generoso Tulagan (NPC-Kampi, Pangasinan) has asked Congress to investigate the delay in the release of GSIS pension checks to thousands of retired government employees.

Tulagan noted that GSIS executives had been reported to be among the highest paid GOCC and GFI officials.

Tulagan also cited complaints by employees of the House of Representatives who were having trouble availing of loans from the GSIS.

"These are the very same people who religiously paid their contributions over the years but failed to get financial relief during these trying times," Tulagan said.

Tulagan filed House Resolution No. 225 which aims to scrutinize the finances of the GSIS.

Previous studies had shown that unless remedial measures were instituted, the GSIS would have no more funds to meet its obligations in two to three years, according to the Pangasinan lawmaker.

"GSIS members have the right to know the actual state of GSIS finances since their hard-earned money in government service make up the state pension fund," Tulagan said.

'Graft squealers' to get big rewards

By Christine O. Avendaño

SQUEAL on a grafter, get a reward.

Administration Sen. Mar Roxas has filed a bill that would make whistle-blowing safe and financially profitable.

Senate Bill No. 1761 will offer cash rewards that could go as high as P10 million. "Graft squealers," as Roxas labeled them, refers to anyone who uncovers and divulges corrupt practices or acts of graft in government.

The bill also guarantees "protection against disciplinary action or reprisals" and, just as important, "bodily security."

In a statement, Roxas said this reward system would motivate and embolden informers, especially since there was no such machinery currently in place.

On the contrary, at least one celebrated case had the whistle blower tagged as a suspect on nationwide television. Acsa Ramirez, the Land Bank cashier who exposed a P203 million tax diversion scheme two years ago, was subsequently able to clear her name, but only after much torment and inconvenience to herself and her family.

The bill is the new senator's fourth anti-corruption measure. It gives a P10-million reward to anyone who pins down the President, the highest official in the land, with proof of corrupt activities. If the grafter caught is the Vice President, the squealer gets P7 million; if it's a member of Congress, P6 million.

Rewards ranging from P100,000 to P5 million are promised those who would tell on other public officials—Cabinet secretaries, justices, military and police generals and chief executives of government-owned and -controlled corporations—and government employees.

In cases of plunder, ill-gotten wealth, bribery and malversation, the prize will be computed at 10 percent of the amount recovered in the final court disposition. For the graft cases, informers will get a sum directly proportional to the salary grade of the most senior respondent.

Roxas' bill also provides that while the case is pending in court, the squealer may be advanced the sum equal to not less than 25 percent of the reward due.

SC orders Cabinet heads to answer senators' petition

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE SUPREME Court on Friday ordered nine Cabinet members to explain why they should not be removed from their posts after opposition senators questioned their appointments as "acting secretaries."

"The court resolved, without giving due course to the petition, to require the respondents to comment thereon within 10 days from notice hereof," the tribunal said in a one-page resolution.

The respondents were Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, Florencio Abad (education), Avelino Cruz (defense), Michael Defensor (environment and natural resources), Joseph Durano (tourism), Raul Gonzalez (justice), Alberto Romulo (foreign affairs), Rene Villa (agrarian reform) and Arthur Yap (agriculture).

The SC resolution was dated Sept. 14 but was only released Friday. Justices Conchita Carpio-Morales and Minita Chico-Nazario did not participate in the deliberations since they were on leave.

Senate Minority Floor Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. and members of the Senate minority bloc on Sept. 8 asked the high court to nullify the respondents' appointments for allegedly being unconstitutional.

They said the nine "acting" secretaries took their oaths of office although they had not been confirmed by the Commission on Appointments (CA). Until the nod of the CA was obtained, the appointees were merely nominated and would not be able to take their oaths of office, much less perform their duties, they said.

Aside from Pimentel, the other petitioners were Senators Edgardo Angara, Juan Ponce Enrile, Luisa Ejercito-Estrada, Jinggoy Estrada, Panfilo Lacson, Alfredo Lim, Jamby Madrigal and Sergio Osmeña III.

They said the Constitution was "clear, unambiguous and unequivocal in its intent" in saying that appointments of heads of departments while Congress was in session could be made only after the CA's consent.

By extending acting appointments to her new Cabinet members, President Macapagal-Arroyo "not only ignored the clear wording of (the Constitution) but also showed an utter lack of respect" for the CA, the petitioners said.

A nominee needing CA confirmation could not be appointed in an acting capacity merely to fill a vacancy. A vacancy in the office of a department secretary could be filled by the designation of an undersecretary.

"The President and her subordinates in the executive department apparently suffer from a propensity to take legal shortcuts in their efforts to solve the problems afflicting the nation," the petitioners said.

They said that the President, by issuing the appointments, was "cleverly" trying to evade a constitutional duty that prohibited her from extending regular or ad interim appointments to Cabinet members while Congress was in session.

If acting appointments were to be allowed, it would then be possible for a President to appoint an acting secretary for a number of years, renewing it every year, without ever having to submit the acting appointment to the CA for confirmation, the petitioners said.

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Officer holding up PNP revamp

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE MASSIVE revamp at the Philippine National Police may not be completed until after one of its more controversial officers retires on Nov. 30.

PNP Director General Edgar Aglipay is waiting for Director Eduardo Matillano to retire in order to accommodate Chief Supt. Reynaldo Varilla, who purportedly single-handedly caused the delay in the revamp, a top PNP official told the INQUIRER yesterday.

Matillano heads the Department of Investigation and Detective Management (DIDM), while Varilla is regional police director of Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, Quezon).

"He's (Aglipay) just waiting for Matillano," said the official who was privy to the deliberations of the PNP Senior Officers Placement and Promotions Board (SOPPB).

As agreed upon by the SOPPB, the source said Varilla would take over the DIDM after Matillano retires in two months.

But Varilla reportedly did not want to leave the much sought-after position of Calabarzon police director and be left with no assignment while awaiting Matillano's retirement.

Last Monday, he was supposed to turn over the Calabarzon post to Chief Supt. Arturo Lomibao, Criminal Investigation and Detection Group director.

But Aglipay, acceding to last-minute lobbying by Varilla and some purportedly influential backers, postponed the turnover, according to a PNP source.

The INQUIRER tried but failed to reach Varilla on his cellular phone.

Varilla's supposed move has had a domino effect on the top-to-bottom revamp Aglipay had envisioned to make the 116,000-strong national police force more professional and efficient.

Besides keeping Lomibao from the juicy Calabarzon post, it has also kept Chief Supt. Jesus Verzosa in the freezer.

Verzosa, the former Intelligence Group director who was sacked over the escape of Indonesian terrorist Fathur Rohman al-Ghozi last year, was supposed to replace Lomibao as CIDG chief.

Aglipay, meanwhile, has decided to ignore the court petition filed by Cebu-based lawyers Roque Amante Jr. and Nicolas Alvarez questioning his six-month term extension.

"I will not be disturbed by any case filed against me," he said. "I will remain focused on serving the public. I serve at the pleasure of the President."

In a 35-page petition filed with the Court of Appeals, Amante and Alvarez argued that the term "extension" was faulty, explaining that the President could extend the terms of the PNP chief and the Armed Forces chief of staff only in times of war and other emergencies.

At the time Aglipay was granted a term extension, neither condition existed, they said.

Payumo welcomes Senate probe of Subic

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT—Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority Chair Felicito Payumo yesterday said he would welcome any investigation into alleged car smuggling in the freeport.

"I'm for a full-blown inquiry on claims that there is smuggling of right-hand drive and second-hand vehicles here," Payumo told the INQUIRER.

He was reacting to Sen. Richard Gordon's plan to ask the Senate to investigate the SBMA for the alleged car smuggling.

Payumo said the investigation should also include the charges against Gordon, a former SBMA chair, citing the P854 million in expenses that the Commission on Audit had disallowed during Gordon's term at the SBMA.

Payumo urged the senator to reveal his real motive for the investigation. "Is he really after the right-hand drive and second-hand vehicles or after me?" he asked.

Gordon had questioned Payumo's salary and other allowances, citing data from the COA showing the SBMA chair was paid P2.6 million last year alone.

Payumo, however, said he only received P51,700 monthly. Of this, P33,342 is deposited in a trust fund for the scholarship of children and cultural minorities of Subic, Bataan and Zambales, he said.

He said part of his salary also goes to the payment of various fees, taxes and contributions to the Bureau of Internal Revenue, the Government Service Insurance System and Philhealth, among others.

Payumo said the SBMA's pay rationalization plan showed the annual salaries and benefits of all SBMA officials were within the limits of Section 2 of Memorandum Order No. 20 issued on June 25, 2001. This specifies that the "actual pay package" shall not exceed twice the standardized rates for comparable national government positions.

"The reduction in my salary and other benefits from P2,154,400 to P1,905,850 per year has been effected, bringing down my total salary and benefits to twice the salary of a department secretary," he said.

The number of SBMA board meetings has been reduced from thrice to twice a month, he said, adding that the board members' monthly per diem had been cut from P60,000 to P20,000. *Allan Macatuno, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

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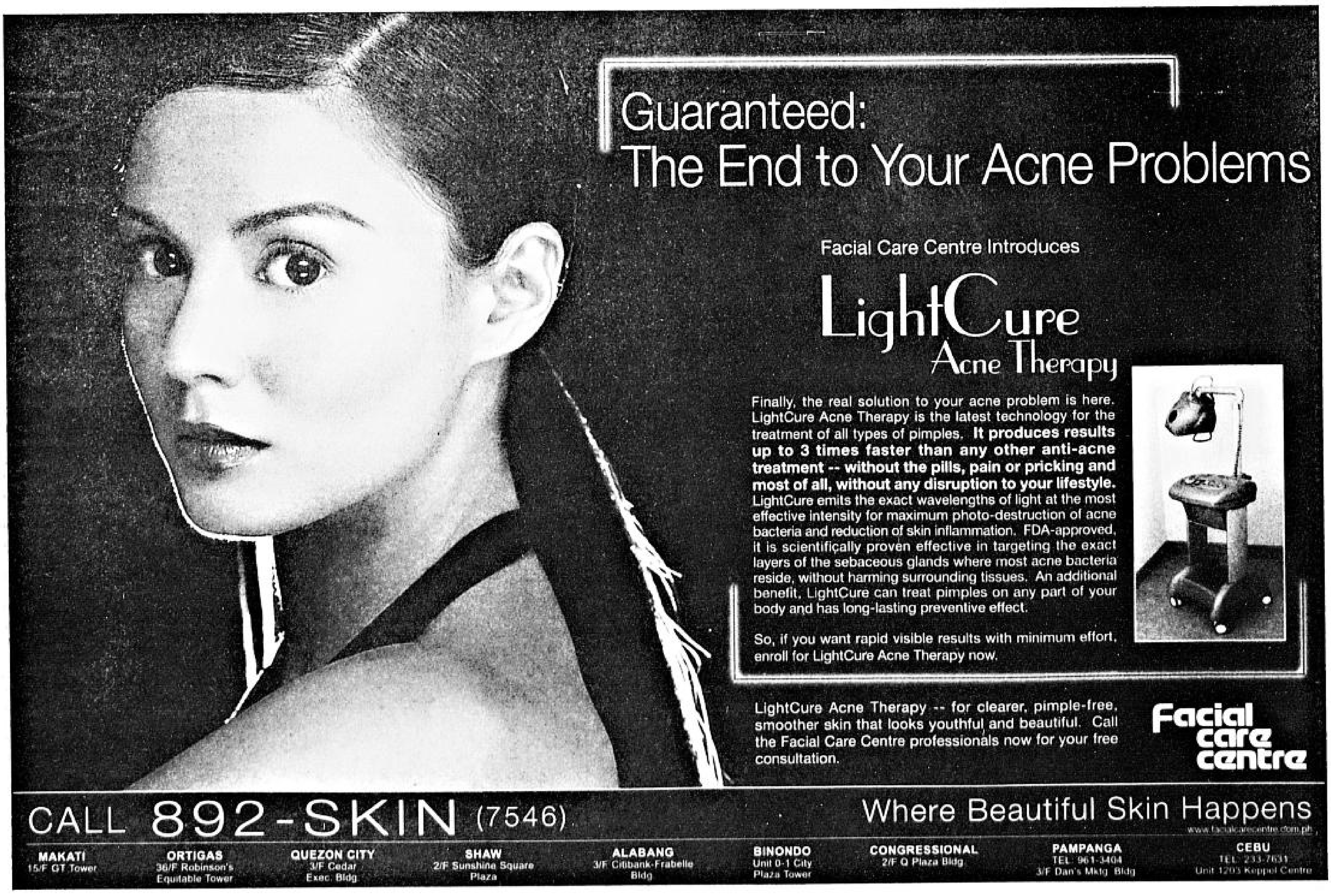

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			International Law – 10:15 am - 12:15 pm (2CU)	Atty. Ronaldo P. Ledesma
	PM Session		Updates in Criminal Law – 1-3 pm (2CU)	Justice Diosdado M. Peralta
			Updates in Constitutional & Election Laws – 3:15 pm - 6:15 pm (3CU)	Justice Regalado E. Maambong
	AM Session	Oct. 9, 2004 Sat.	Updates in Remedial Law – 8-10 am (2CU)	Dean Ed Vincent S. Albano
			Pre-Trial Skills – 10:15 am – 12:15 pm (2CU)	Justice Noel G. Tijam
	PM Session		Trial Technique – 1-3 pm (2CU)	Justice Edilberto G. Sandoval
			International & Domestic Arbitration – 3:15 pm – 6:15 pm (3CU)	Dean Custodio O. Parlade
	AM Session	Oct. 16, 2004 Sat.	Arbitration Law & Agreements – 8-10 am (2CU)	Prof. Mario E. Valderrama
			MCLE-Prescribed: Rules on Electronic Evidence – 10:15 am - 12:15 pm (2CU)	Atty. Ivan John E. Uy
	PM Session		Updates in Legal Ethics – 1-4 pm (3CU)	Justice Hector L. Hofileña
			Updates in Labor Law – 4:15 pm – 6:15 pm (2CU)	Dean Froilan M. Bacungan
	AM Session	Oct. 23, 2004 Sat.	Legal Writing - 8-10 am (2CU)	Justice Hugo E. Gutierrez, Jr.
			MCLE-Prescribed: Law & Economics – 10:15 am – 12:15 pm (2CU)	Prof. Harry L. Roque, Jr.
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Romulo to assure UN of RP support for Iraq

By TJ Burgonio

THE PHILIPPINES will reiterate its commitment to the reconstruction of Iraq, among other things, during the upcoming United Nations General Assembly, Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo said.

Romulo left Manila yesterday morning for New York to attend the UN meeting, which is also expected to tackle proposals to increase the number of permanent and non-permanent members of the UN Security Council.

"I go to New York soon to reiterate our support for the United Nations and its continuing importance to the world and the Philippines," Romulo told the Manila Overseas Press Club Friday night.

The Philippines is a non-permanent member of the Security Council. Ambassador Lauro Baja Jr. is the country's permanent representative to the UN.

"In the United Nations, as a non-permanent member of the Security Council, we're helping preserve peace," Romulo said.

He said he would meet with UN Secretary General Kofi Annan and his counterparts from other UN member-countries to discuss related concerns "always with our foreign policy" in mind, which he said was premised on the national interest.

"In his talk with Annan, he will reiterate the country's commitment to rebuild Iraq, among other things," said Gilberto Asuque, foreign affairs spokesperson.

On several occasions, the Philippines had declared its commitment to help in the reconstruction of Iraq under the auspices of the UN.

But Romulo ruled out anew the deployment of Filipino troops to the war-torn country.

"Even in March 2003, we discounted sending combat troops. We never thought of combat troops, and when we sent the humanitarian contingent, that was in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 1546. That was the terms of reference," he said.

The Philippines sent a 96-member humanitarian contingent to Iraq last year, but pulled out the remaining 51 men in July to save the life of a Filipino truck driver who was abducted and threatened with beheading by Iraqi militants.

Proposals to increase the number of permanent and non-permanent members to the council are part of the agenda of the UN meeting, according to Romulo.

Romulo also said that he expects to meet with US President George W. Bush, who is hosting a reception for the delegates on the fringes of the UN affair.

But he declined to give details about the message he would convey to the US President during their meeting.

Romulo stressed that Manila and Washington "could work together" even though the latter was "hurt" over the withdrawal of peacekeepers from Iraq in July, a month ahead of schedule.

He also said that Washington could not afford to "bypass" Manila now because the three million Filipinos in the US are an "emerging political force."

"Especially in a close race, you must remember that a few thousand votes could have made President Nixon win the presidential election against John Kennedy... In a tight election, the United States realizes this," he said.

Bush is seeking reelection in November against Democrat challenger Sen. John Kerry.

Correction

THE HEADLINE of the story about the Baguio Country Club and Securities and Exchange Commission case that appeared on Page A17 yesterday should have read "Appeals court says SEC may not interfere in Baguio Country Club elections," not "Appeals court says SEC may interfere in Baguio Country Club elections."

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to Gerry Lirio, city editor, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City; fax Nos. 897-4793/94; e-mail addresses:glirio@inquirer.com.ph and daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

Complaints about lack of fairness or objectivity may be sent to Raul Palabrica, readers' advocate, the same address and fax numbers as those of the city editor, and e-mail address:rpalabrica@inquirer.com.ph.

AN OPEN LETTER

TO : PRESIDENT GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO, EDUCATION SECRETARY FLORENCIO ABAD, THE CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES, THE WORLD BANK, THE ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK, REP. ROLANDO ANDAYA JR. AND THE FILIPINO PEOPLE.

AN INVISIBLE CRIME

The Department of Education recently started delivering 14 million textbooks to 42,000 public schools nationwide under the National Textbook Delivery Program. To ensure that deliveries are of the right quantity and physical quality, it enlisted the help of civil society organizations to inspect books upon delivery. But has anyone bothered to check what's actually written in between the covers of these books? Has anybody seen the incredible inanities and unbelievable idiocies which these books pass off as "lessons" and "instructions"?

ASYA: NOON, NGAYON AT SA HINAHARAP, written by Teofista Vivar, Evelina Viloria, Remedios Quiray and Ruth Fuentes, published by SD PUBLICATIONS and printed in Thailand, is the only second year high school textbook for Social Studies approved by the DepEd for use in all public secondary schools. (A "commercial" edition, **ASYA: HEOGRAPIYA, KASAYSAYAN AT KULTURA**, published and printed in the Philippines by VIBAL PUBLISHING, caters to the private schools.) After a thorough examination of this book, I discovered that it contains four hundred thirty-one (431) errors, and this despite the fact that it passed the evaluation and quality production standards of the DepEd not once but twice (2000 and 2004).

- **DAFFY-NITIONS** : India's Untouchables (hindi magalaw). Umbrella organization (napapayungang samahan). Whaling (pangingisda ng balyena). Warlord (may lupa). Rice ball (bigas na hugis bola). Basket-weaving (naghahabi ng basket). Ziggurat (tore ng Sumeria na tulad ng skyscraper ay binubuo ng ilang palapag). Sitar (may kwerdas na gawa sa teakwood). Gobi Desert (mabuhanging disyerto). Sumerians (nagsusunggaban tulad ng mga toro). Ramadan (tinanggap ni Muhammad ang pahayag na Arabo).
- **About ISLAM** : Nagsimula ang Islam nang si Muhammad ay nagkaroon ng pagkakataong magnilay dahil sa pagkakaroon ng asawang mayaman bagaman may edad sa kanya ng 15 taon. Maraming kaisipang Islam ang mula sa Judaismo at Kristyanismo, sa Matandang Tipan, sa Birhen at kay San Miguel. Pinutol ni Muhammad ang ugnayan sa Hinduismo at Kristyanismo, ginawang direksyon ng pagdarasal sa Mecca sa halip na Herusalem at pinahintulutan ang paglalakbay sa Kaaba na hugis kubo at sa loob ay nakatayo ang batong itim na galing kay Muhammad. Ang mosque ng mga Muslim ay lubhang maraming dekorasyon at marami sa mga ito ang dinisenyo ng mga arkitektong Kristyano.
- **JEWS** : Ang mga Hudyo ay palaging ihinihiwalay dahil sa kanilang tradisyon tulad ng pagpatay ng mga Aleman. Ang Torah na binubuo ng unang 5 aklat ng Lumang Tipan ay naglalaman ng mga kaisipan tungkol sa pag-ibig at paggalang sa kababaihan.
- **CHINA** : Itinatag ni Sun Yat-sen ang Partido Komunista ng Tsina. Mahilig ang mga Tsino sa opyo. Ang mga babaing Tsino ay pinagsusuot ng sapatos na bakal, mga pangahas at karaniwang matatagpuan sa mga mumurahing apartments. May pinakamalaking deposito ng loess ang Tsina. Tanging ang timog na bahagi lamang ng Tsina ang maraming tao. Ang Gintong Aral ni Confucius ay nakasaad sa negatibong pangungusap. Maraming makikitang pagoda sa Luneta. Nasakop ni Mao Tse-tung ang Tsina at ginawa itong may pinakamaraming tao sa lahat ng komunistang bansa. Ang Great Wall of China ay 170 milya ang haba.

The Government Procurement Reform Law (RA 9184) features an anti-lemon provision which requires "the repair or return of substandard or defective goods bought by the government." How can the presence of 431 errors in a single textbook be legally and morally right? The anti-lemon provision should be applied to textbooks that are substandard or defective. For possessing errors very much in excess of what is tolerable, SD Publications' **ASYA,** procured and delivered by the government using loans from the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank yet (like so many other public school textbooks) printed abroad, is a lemon whose corrosive acid eats into the heart, mind and soul of its user. Miseducation resulting from years of using error-riddled textbooks compromises the student's chance of a good life in the future by ruining his potential for growth and development. The making of defective textbooks is an invisible crime which must be exposed and then stopped. This paid advertisement is my contribution to the ongoing effort by all the good citizens of this country to help avert the storm of economic collapse which is nearly upon us. I will also donate to the DepEd the 82-page List of Errors (of SD Publications' **ASYA**) that is the basis of my evaluation and this ad.

ANTONIO CALIPJO GO
Citizen
197 Sauyo Road, Novaliches, QC

ADVT

NLEX may raise toll fees sans hearing, says solon

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—The Manila North Tollways Corp., which rehabilitated the more than 80-km North Luzon Expressway, can "arbitrarily" increase toll fees because its agreement with the government does not require public hearings, Pampanga Rep. Anna York Bondoc said.

"With the STOA (Supplemental Toll Operations Agreement), the MNTC can raise toll fees without congressional approval, without Toll Regulatory Board approval or any public hearing whatsoever," Bondoc told the INQUIRER.

She has filed Resolution 146, which is now in the House committee on rules, seeking to remove this provision in the STOA and to stop the first set of rate adjustments scheduled in December. The MNTC would be charging P2.49 per km for cars, P6.23 per km for buses and light trucks, and P7.47 per km for cargo trucks.

At P2.49 per km, a car owner would have to pay a toll fee of at least P199 to travel from Balintawak in Quezon City to Sta. Ines in Mabalacat, Pampanga.

Lawyer Romulo Quimbo Jr., chief of the MNTC legal department, disputed Bondoc's claim by citing Presidential Decrees 1113 and 1894 under which the MNTC obtained its original and amended franchise to operate the NLEX.

While the franchise allows automatic adjustments, it requires the MNTC to notify the government of new rates and to have them reviewed, Quimbo said. The approved rates are then published, road users can file petitions for rate reductions before the TRB and public hearings are held.

Documents earlier furnished by the MNTC showed that the STOA went through 38 drafts between June 1996 and August 1997. The toll rates were stipulated in Clause 11 of the STOA agreed upon between the MNTC and the government in June 1998.

Under the STOA, toll rates are determined through the base toll rates and adjustment factors.

The base toll rates on a per entry basis were P14, P35 and P42 for cars, buses and trucks, respectively. On a per kilometer basis, the base toll rates were P0.82, P2.05 and P2.46 for cars, buses and trucks.

The adjustment factors—inflation rate and peso-dollar exchange rate—were deemed to be the "strong drivers" in determining the toll fees.

Under the STOA, the rate adjustments in the first 10 years are: 500-600 percent increase during the first two years; 4 percent decrease after two years; 15 percent increase in the third up to the fifth rounds of increases, and 6 percent on the sixth increase.

Bondoc said her office was leading multisectoral efforts to bring down the initial increase to a "reasonable level." *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Bemedalled Scout Ranger dies in Aruba

FORMER Scout Ranger Meynardo Antonio Lincallo Mangcucang Jr. died on Sept. 8 after suffering cardiac arrest in Aruba, in the Carribean. He was 56.

A scout ranger in the Armed Forces of the Philippines in the 1960s and 70s, Mangcucang earned the Presidential Gold Cross Award for bravery, for playing a pivotal role in the capture of one of the top leaders of the communist insurgency.

He is survived by his wife Cerelina Paloma; children Michelle, Rhea, Mae, Rona and Remus; grandchildren Cale, Basti, Chesca, Miguel and Marome; parents Antonio Sr. and Florefida, and siblings Myrna Factora, Edgardo, Marivic de Ausen, Jocelyn Garcia, Florian Villasenor, Maritoni Eugenio and Ma. Bettina Fernandez.

His body lies at the Don Bosco Chapel in Makati City. Interment will be on Sept. 22 at 9 a.m.

SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

REMEDIAL LAW (CRIMINAL PROCEDURE/EVIDENCE)—**Burden of proof of the prosecution**—The prosecution is burdened to prove beyond reasonable doubt that (a) the crime charged was committed, and (b) the identity of the perpetrators of the said crime. In People vs Esmale (243 SCRA 578 (1995), the Supreme Court held that the first duty of the prosecution is not to present the crime but to prove the identity of the criminal. To warrant the conviction of the accused, the identification of the accused as one of the assailants must be positive, categorical and consistent, made by a credible witness or witnesses. The identification of the accused as the perpetrator or one of the perpetrators of the crime charged is concededly not an easy task. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Callejo, Sr., Second Division, People vs Calica, G. R. No. 139178]

BY R. B. VERA

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, September 20, 2004
25th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Pro 3:27-34
Gospel: Lk 8:16-18

Jesus said to his disciples, "No one, after lighting a lamp covers it with a bowl or puts it under the bed; rather he puts it on a lampstand so that people coming in may see the light. In the same way, there is nothing hidden that shall not be uncovered; nothing kept secret that shall not be known clearly. Now, take care how well you listen, for whoever produces will be given more, but from those who do not produce, even what they seem to have will be taken away from them."

Commentary

Matthew's gospel too has this image of a light on a lamp stand; but there's a subtle difference. "It gives light to all who are in the house" (Mt 5:15); while here in Luke's gospel, it gives light to those who enter the house. Matthew was Jewish and writing for Christians of Jewish origin, but Luke was a Gentile writing for Gentile Christians. Gentiles are coming to the house of faith from the outside.

Read in connection with this, Ephesians 5:8-9. "Once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light—for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true."

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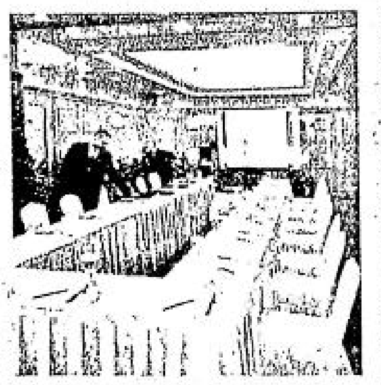

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Korea looking to invest in energy

SOUTH Korea has expressed interest in investing in the country's energy sector by setting up a $250-million hydroelectric plant in Naga, Cebu, foreign affairs officials said yesterday.

Cebu, home to the second-largest number of Korean expatriates after Manila, is becoming a favorite destination of Koreans.

South Korean Ambassador to Manila Yu Myung-Hwan relayed his country's interest during a call on Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo recently.

"This is indicative of [our] strong confidence in the Philippine economy," officials quoted Yu as telling Romulo.

Romulo told Yu he wanted to firm up the investment with his South Korean counterpart at the UN General Assembly this month. *TJ Burgonio*

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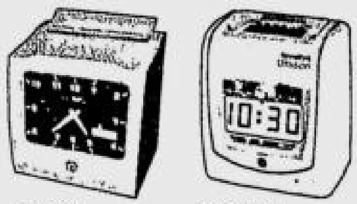

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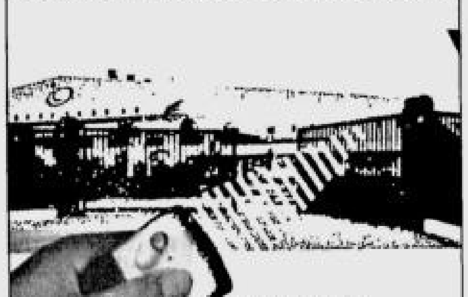

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Asean tackles illegal drugs spread

SENIOR officials on drug matters of Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) member-countries are meeting in the Manila beginning today to discuss region-wide strategies against the proliferation of illegal drugs.

Dangerous Drugs Board (DDB) Undersecretary and Executive Director Jose Calida said anti-drugs officials from Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, Burma (Myanmar), Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam would be taking part in the four-day 25th Asean Senior Officials on Drug Matters (ASOD) conference as well as the Asean and China Cooperative Operations in Response to Dangerous Drugs (Accord) meeting.

He said the DDB is hosting the affair at the Shangri-La Hotel in Makati City.

Worried

But Congress leaders are worried the affair could turn out badly for the Philippines because the DDB does not have a chairman following President Macapagal-Arroyo's failure to appoint someone to the post.

In a letter to the President dated Sept. 6, House oversight committee on dangerous drugs chair Rep. Roque Ablan said the ASOD and Accord meetings made it imperative for Ms Arroyo to appoint a new DDB chair after Interior Secretary Jose Lina Jr. resigned from the post early this year.

Some DDB members, who asked not to be named, said the failure of the President to appoint a new chair could subject the board to legal challenges, thereby jeopardizing the government's fight against illegal drugs.

Dangerous

"This is a dangerous situation. She (the President) must not dilly-dally on this one," a DDB member said.

The first ASOD meeting was held in 1976 and became the major Asean body to formulate recommendations in four major areas against illegal drugs, such as enforcement and legislation, treatment and rehabilitation, prevention and information, and training and research.

In a related development, 16 congressmen from the Visayas and Central Luzon wrote President Arroyo endorsing Calida for the DDB's top post.

The legislators, in a letter dated Sept. 16, said Calida's programs and policies at the DDB had heightened public awareness of the government's anti-drug policies.

The United States-based International Narcotics Enforcement Officers Association, meanwhile, announced it had bestowed its International Award of Honor on Calida in recognition of his dedication to duty in the field of drug control, prevention and enforcement.

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Machine-readable passports to ease Pinoy travelers' woes

By TJ Burgonio

EVER wonder why your Philippine passport gets more than the usual scrutiny from immigration officers at airports abroad?

That's because passports issued in Manila are not machine-readable, hence, they are more suspect to having been tampered.

But don't lose hope. The Department of Foreign Affairs is rushing the implementation of its P1.015-billion machine-readable passport and visa (MRPV) project to meet its initial target of issuance in the first quarter of 2005.

"It won't be long before we join the ranks of machine-readable passport holders," Foreign Undersecretary Franklin Ebdalin said.

The machine-readable passports will incorporate biometrics and additional security features such as palm prints, a 2-D bar code and digital photos, among other things, officials said.

Biometrics, which entails the electronic scanning of one's fingers (in addition to the passport holder's photo), is currently being used by most countries. The US Embassy in Manila started issuing visas this month employing this latest technology.

"Whatever the technology the department decides to adopt, the machine-readable passport and visa will definitely comply with international civil aviation organization (ICAO) standards," Ebdalin said.

The current "machine-ready readable passport" includes security features like a laser-perforated serial number, bar code and heat-sealed laminate, but this has not stopped immigration officers at modern airports abroad from closely scrutinizing them.

If everything goes as scheduled, the regional consular office at Clark, the former US air base in Angeles, Pampanga, will start issuing machine-readable passports to applicants from central and northern Luzon in March next year.

In July 2005, all regional consular offices in the country are expected to be fully equipped to offer the same service.

But it won't be until January 2006 that the central facility, which will be constructed on a sprawling property along Roxas Boulevard in Pasay City (across from the DFA office), will become fully operational to issue the passports en masse.

The hub's database will be linked to those of the National Statistics Office, the National Bureau of Investigation and other law enforcement agencies to ensure faster verification of the identities and records of the applicants, according to Emelinda Lee-Pineda, MRPV program manager.

Once the project gets underway, machine-readable passports will be issued 24 hours after the submission of an application, a far cry from the regular six-day processing at present.

Filipinos working and residing abroad can start securing such passports from the nearest Philippine consulate in March 2006.

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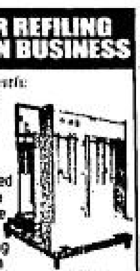
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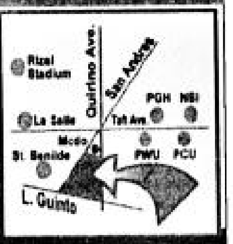

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Banks owe gov't ₱38B in back taxes

From page A1

would decide if the banks were liable," BAP executive director Leonito Coronel said in a text message to the INQUIRER.

Based on the BIR's assessment, Salceda said that from 1998 to 2004, the banks should have paid the government P21 billion in taxes (evenly split among domestic and foreign banks).

The 45 domestic banks owe part of the P10.5 billion in back taxes, according to the lawmaker. Plus penalties of P17 billion, the banks owe the government a total of P38 billion.

Salceda has proposed that the BIR collect on the full P21 billion, waive the penalties, and allow the banks to pay their dues in staggered payments over two years.

He said a compromise deal should minimize the systemic risk to the banking system and avoid protracted litigation that could deprive the government of badly needed cash for its operations.

The BIR has set Dec. 15 as the deadline for its abatement program, which will waive the penalties.

Salceda said the collection of back taxes would have a marginal impact on FCDU loans, primarily borrowings of exporters, because they were already exempt from taxes as of last year.

He said the collection of the back taxes would highlight the BIR's improving collection efficiency, show proof of President Macapagal-Arroyo's call to share the burden in raising revenues, and implement the letter of the law.

"More importantly, the government needs the money," he said.

Salceda said the back taxes were a one-time gain and the government would still need to pass new tax measures to ensure recurring revenue collections.

Ms Arroyo is asking Congress to pass eight revenue measures that seek to raise P80 billion a year.

The revenue measures are aimed at reducing the national government's budget deficit, which this year is expected to reach about P200 billion.

Clerical error

The President, who acknowledged last month that the country was in the middle of a fiscal crisis, said Thursday that the economy would be in "death throes" in two years unless new taxes were collected.

The BAP has questioned the basis for the BIR's tax assessment, claiming that it was a mere clerical error in the CTRP and that legislators had no intention of removing this tax exemption.

But in a letter to Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura on June 17, BIR Commissioner Guillermo Parayno said "the deletion of certain words ('exempt from all taxes') in a statute indicates that the legislature intended to change the meaning of the statute."

"Thus, the payment by FCDUs and OBUs of the 10 percent final income tax does not exempt them from the payment of the GRT, DST and other taxes," Parayno said.

GMA appeal

Salceda said that while the BAP had argued that Congress "inadvertently omitted or overlooked the tax exemption" of the FCDU loans in crafting the CTRP, "the law is very clear and congressional records (showed) that it was the intent of Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile (then Senate ways and means committee chair) to withdraw the exemption."

Ms Arroyo said businessmen should help drive up the peso's value to 50 to the dollar by investing less abroad and expanding their businesses in the country.

In a speech before members of the Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry Inc. on Friday night, she said: "Invest in the Philippines rather than abroad to bring the peso-dollar value to 50."

The peso has continued to fall since it improved slightly after the May elections when Ms Arroyo defeated her top rival, movie actor Fernando Poe Jr., who rated very low among businessmen in pre-election surveys.

The President's statement has brought to fore the significant outflow of investments from the Philippines to other countries, notably China, over the last few years. The outflows have contributed to the steady depreciation of the peso to above the 56-to-the-dollar mark.

Ms Arroyo is banking on private investors to take up the slack in investment spending up to next year because debt payments and salaries have reduced government capital outlays to a minimum.

SALCEDA

Unrest scenario over new taxes may be alarmist

From page A1

The survey was conducted a month before 11 economists at the University of the Philippines School of Economics published a paper warning that the country's fiscal crisis could lead to economic collapse in two years unless the widening fiscal deficit and ballooning public debt were immediately checked by revenue and cost-cutting measures.

The survey reflected the public mood of resistance to new and increased taxes before the UP paper was published. The paper accurately read the general mood when it said that the public and the political elite did not seem to be aware that "our most urgent problem"—as emphasized by President Macapagal-Arroyo in her State of the Nation Address in July—was the "worsening" budget deficit and debt problem.

The purpose of the paper was to shock the nation into realizing that the "looming public threat represented by an uncontrolled public debt is indeed the biggest economic challenge the country will have to confront immediately and for the remainder of this decade."

How the political class has addressed the problem does not indicate that the paper has achieved its intended shock effect. What has happened is that both the Arroyo administration and Congress—the institution in which resistance to new and increased taxes is historically deep-seated, have not only skirted the issue.

Worse, the administration and Congress have become so complacent and cocky that they think they can just banish the issue away by dancing around it and "fiddling while Rome is aflame."

Opposition to tax

The Pulse Asia survey can be used by the popular representatives of the people lodged in Congress to reinforce their opposition to the tax measures on the ground that these reforms are unacceptable to the people.

The deficit and debt issue has been diverted to sub-issues over which the agenda of public debate has been rechanneled by both the administration and Congress. The issues are the (1) pork barrel, (2) retrenchment and "austerity" in the executive department, and (3) going back to the line item method of budgeting from the current lump-sum appropriation.

These questions basically boil down to first, who sheds fat most, and second, a tradeoff between keeping the pork barrel and passing new and higher taxes.

The refocus of priority to these side issues is precisely what the UP paper had warned against. The paper anticipated the deflection of the problem to subsidiary issues. It warned: "The problem of the ballooning government debt, therefore, cannot then be attributed solely to the 'extravagance' of government budgets, or the inadequacy of its tax revenues."

The paper adds that "an equally important part of the story has been the dismal performance of government-run corporations and the equally disastrous policies of previous administrations that have affected them. Both have played a major role in determining the size of the debt and the burden that taxpayers must bear to service it."

The question of the salaries of the so-called fat cat executives of government corporations has come up recently. In this area, the administration has not shown a tough will to cut down the executives' salaries to size.

Tokenism

The administration's exhortations of "austerity" and "simple living" are nothing but tokenism to show the public it is cutting costs and to undercut criticism in Congress that the President is unwilling to share the pain of sacrifice while she calls upon members of Congress to reduce, let alone give up, their pork barrel.

The UP paper anticipated the fallacious arguments that have been raised to address the deficit. It said:

"Let there be no mistake: there is every reason to look closely into the efficiency of public spending in order to eliminate waste and corruption. Raising the efficiency of government expenditure and investment implies that more results are achieved for the same of expenditure. But when the bulk of national government spending is already preempted by debt service, the internal revenue allotment to local governments, salaries of teachers, policemen and soldiers, not to mention maintenance and operations, it is difficult to find ways of reducing the allotments that are sufficient to meet the demands of sustainable debt without provoking large dislocations and inviting social unrest."

What the paper is saying is that cost-cutting to the bone has its social costs, in terms of public unrest. Thus, it must be made in tandem with other measures.

Confronting the "no to new taxes" argument, the paper said: "An attractive proposal is the often-repeated line that in fact no new taxes are needed; all that is required is sound enforcement and tax administration; get rid of corruption, and you get rid of the deficit problem."

Deception

"It is no surprise that this fallacy has spread and taken hold: It was the common theme propagated by both administration and opposition in the past electoral campaign, and both must now assume full responsibility for the deception they have foisted on the public," the paper continued.

"The grain of truth in this suggestion is that … the efficiency of tax collection has indeed fallen off dramatically and is a major cause of the current budget deficits. It is also true that if the revenue effort were restored to 17-18 percent from the current 12 percent (of GDP), the current trajectory of moderate growth, inflation and depreciation might stand a chance of being sustained.

"The crucial consideration, however, is first, whether the time exists for such reforms in administration to play out before the time bomb explodes. It has taken all of five to six years for the revenue effort to reach its present dire levels. Can it possibly recover in a shorter time? Most likely not."

The Pulse Asia survey presents to the Arroyo administration and Congress the challenge that they have to impress upon their constituencies: that new taxes are absolutely critical to raise revenue to narrow the deficit and avert the slide to economic collapse.

Some senators have warned of public unrest if new taxes are imposed. This vision of apocalypse is alarmist. It is nothing frightening compared to the "howling mobs" roaming the streets in the event of economic collapse.

PNP task force targets political armies in Abra

From page A1

then President Corazon Aquino on Sept. 16, 1987 on Mt. Data in Mt. Province.

But he said Balweg's old militia was not about to declare war against the government. A September letter to Malacañang urged President Macapagal-Arroyo to widen the integration process to allow members of their faction to join the military.

Malacañang integrated members of CPLA factions led by James Sawatang and Mayor Mailed Molina of Bucloc, Abra.

Assassins

Chief Supt. Rowland Albano, Cordillera police director, condemned the private armies two weeks after the INQUIRER ran a special report exposing the assassins of Abra.

Albano confirmed the existence of PAGs but said the police needed to evaluate the groups' origins. "I hope that this (Task Force Abra) will not be given any political color and that there will be coordinated efforts from all sectors," he said.

Records of the Commission on Elections showed Abra had the highest incidence of political violence in the Cordillera.

"We mean business and we are determined to restore peace and order in Abra," Albano said. "We hope to bring back the people's faith in the police."

In a statement, Albano said the police had arrested 17 PAG members since January. Among those arrested were six CPLA members, five security guards, three police and jail officers, and three barangay officials.

'Pakda-ar'

Albano said the anti-PAG drive, known as "Pakda-ar," was offering rewards for any information leading to the identification of hired goons and the confiscation of their weapons.

He also said the campaign had so far netted 13 PAG members controlled by Abra politicians.

The police collected 150 loose firearms which had been either confiscated, recovered or surrendered.

But sources in the National Police Commission said the government had also placed top Cordillera police officials under surveillance.

One of the officials was associated with an Abra warlord and was often seen at the politician's house, the sources said. *With reports from Frank Cimatu and Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Car bombings raise Iraq death toll to 300 in week

BAGHDAD, Iraq—An al-Qaida linked group has threatened in a videotape to behead two Americans and a Briton within two days, and insurgents have carried out a new string of car bombings, killing at least 20 Iraqis and two American soldiers.

The unrelenting violence has taken 300 lives in the past week.

The videotape which surfaced Saturday was the first word on the fate of Americans Jack Hensley and Eugene Armstrong and Briton Kenneth Bigley since the three construction contractors were kidnapped from their Baghdad home two days earlier.

All three sat on the floor, blindfolded, slightly bowed but apparently unharmed.

"My job consists of installing and furnishing camps at Taji base," each man said in turn after identifying himself. At one point, a militant's rifle pointed down at the head of the man who identified himself as Hensley.

The Tawhid and Jihad group, led by Jordanian militant Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, claimed responsibility for the abduction and demanded the release of Iraqi women detained in two American prisons here.

The videotape was broadcast by Al-Jazeera shortly before it revealed a fresh kidnapping claim. Another group said it had seized 10 workers for an American-Turkish company and threatened to kill them in three days if their firm didn't leave Iraq.

Kidnappings and spectacular bombings have become the signature weapons of insurgents waging a 17-month campaign against US and Iraqi forces, a campaign that has persisted since the interim government of Prime Minister Ayad Allawi took power in June.

Nevertheless, Allawi insisted US and Iraqi forces were winning the fight and said progress would be made to calm the violence before crucial elections set for January.

The insurgency is "not getting stronger; it's getting more desperate. We are squeezing out the insurgency," Allawi said in an interview to be aired Sunday on ABC's "This Week."

"We are winning. We will continue to win. And we are going to prevail," he said.

Guerrillas have struck with increasing sophistication in Baghdad, the center of Allawi's authority, and have dealt punishing blows against Iraq's security forces—the lynchpin of the US strategy for restoring security.

In the northern city of Kirkuk, a car sped at a crowd of would-be recruits lined up at the offices of the Iraqi National Guard on Saturday. Guardsmen opened fire on the vehicle and it exploded, leaving the street strewn with bloodied bodies, twisted metal and shards of glass.

At least 19 people were killed and 67 wounded, the Health Ministry said.

It was the third bombing this week targeting the beleaguered security forces, seen as collaborators with the United States and its allies.

AP

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Investors hit by insecurity count losses

DUBAI—Rampant violence and an escalating hostage crisis in Iraq are putting a strain on Gulf investors who, having banked on a flourishing post-Saddam Hussein neighbor are now bitterly counting their losses.

The near-daily car bombings, assassination attempts and kidnappings are crippling foreign companies, a number of which have been forced to halt operations in Iraq.

Financiers who have pumped millions into establishing businesses there barely 17 months ago are already disappointed with the impact on their balance sheets but are biding their time, hoping security will somehow improve.

"Since last April, the market and business went into a nosedive," said a Dubai-based businessman, who in the first 11 months after the April 2003 fall of Saddam's regime invested in excess of $7 million in opening businesses in Iraq.

"From April to the first week of September, we have incurred losses of potential income of almost $3 million," he told AFP, requesting anonymity.

He has two four-star hotels in Iraq, a garment factory, laundry services, a trading company as well as food catering and manpower supply services.

"All investment was made after the war last year and early this year," he said. But since April, when four US contractors were killed by insurgents in the flashpoint Sunni Muslim town of Fallujah, the business climate has deteriorated to the point that the market is "way behind" the first two months of 2004.

"People in general don't buy unless they need something badly. The Iraqi government is not buying. They issue tenders, you submit bills and there's no decision to buy things. It seems they don't have a budget yet," he said.

One consequence is that he has had to lay off 50 percent of his manpower, all Iraqi, thereby affecting the flow of money back into an already depressed economy.

One of his hotels, located on the banks of the Tigris River, was completed in April. "We've locked it, with all the imported furniture still inside," he said. Five months later it is still barricaded.

His second hotel went from almost 100 percent to 5 percent occupancy, said the businessman, who has two companies in Dubai and 10 in Iraq, including subsidiaries.

At the outset of his entry to the Iraqi market, his projected pay-back was on average two years.

"What even happened on some projects when we started was that the pay-back was nine months to a year. It was excellent." But the worsening situation since April put a stop to that and he can no longer speculate when he will get a good return on his investment.

The first business requirement for a successful economy in Iraq would obviously be improved security, he said. The next would be changing the country's commercial laws and strengthening its banking system to better serve potential investors.

A spokesperson for the Dubai-based Iraqi Business Council, set up earlier this year to promote joint ventures in Iraq, and grouping Iraqi businessmen and companies in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), said the unrest has affected businesses throughout the region that are dealing with Iraq.

AFP

UN tells Sudan: Stop killing spree

UNITED NATIONS—A divided UN Security Council approved a resolution threatening oil sanctions against Sudan unless the government reins in Arab militias blamed for a killing spree in Darfur and ordered an investigation of whether the attacks constitute genocide.

The vote Saturday was 11-0 with four abstentions—China, Russia, Pakistan and Algeria.

China, a permanent council member with veto power, said immediately after the vote that it would veto any future resolution that sought to impose sanctions on Sudan.

"I told the American government that the position of my government on sanctions is a firm one," said China's UN Ambassador Wang Guangya. "We always believe that sanctions is not a helpful means to achieve political objectives. It will only make matters worse."

The resolution adopted Saturday says the council would have to meet again to consider sanctions against Sudan's petroleum sector or other punitive measures if the government doesn't act quickly to stop the violence and bring the perpetrators to justice—or if it doesn't cooperate with an African Union monitoring force.

The resolution strongly endorses the deployment of a beefed-up African Union force with an expanded monitoring mission that would actively try to prevent attacks and mediate to stop the conflict from escalating. More than 50,000 people have already died and over 1.2 million have fled their homes to escape the violence.

It also authorizes Secretary General Kofi Annan, who was in the council chamber for the vote, to rapidly appoint an international commission to investigate reports of human rights violations in Darfur and determine "whether or not acts of genocide have occurred."

Last week, US President George W. Bush's administration for the first time called the attacks "genocide," a crime punishable under a 1948 UN convention.

Sudan's UN Ambassador Elfatih Erwa said the government would implement the "unfair" resolution despite "the injustices it contains." He accused the United States of introducing it solely to achieve "the political objectives" of President George W. Bush's administration and Congress—a charge immediately rejected by US Ambassador John Danforth. *AP*

N. Ireland talks fail to secure agreement

LEEDS CASTLE, England—High-pressure talks among rival Northern Ireland parties have ended with no agreement to revive a Catholic-Protestant administration, but British Prime Minister Tony Blair insisted that a deal "historic in its meaning" may yet be achieved.

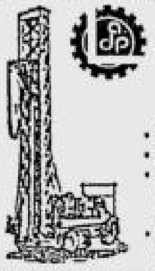
Blair and Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern—who oversaw Northern Ireland's Good Friday accord of 1998 and have spent two years striving to revive its central goal of power-sharing—stood side by side Saturday as delegations filtered out of the Leeds Castle meeting place. They looked tired, but tried to sound upbeat.

Blair said negotiators had "not yet achieved a comprehensive agreement" but insisted that lower-level talks next week would keep pressing. "There is huge potential in what has happened here," he said.

"We believe that what is now on offer is reasonable in its substance and historic in its meaning," Blair said at the end of three days of talks at the castle southeast of London.

Both leaders said they had hoped to broker an agreement between Sinn Fein, the Irish Republican Army-linked party, and the Democratic Unionists, who represent most of the province's British Protestant majority. But for the third time in two years, a negotiating marathon led by the two premiers failed to break the deadlock.

Blair said Sinn Fein has not yet provided a formal statement from the IRA spelling out its position. But he said he expected the underground group to announce its intentions soon. *AP*



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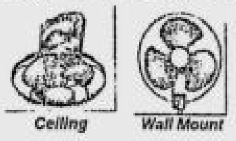

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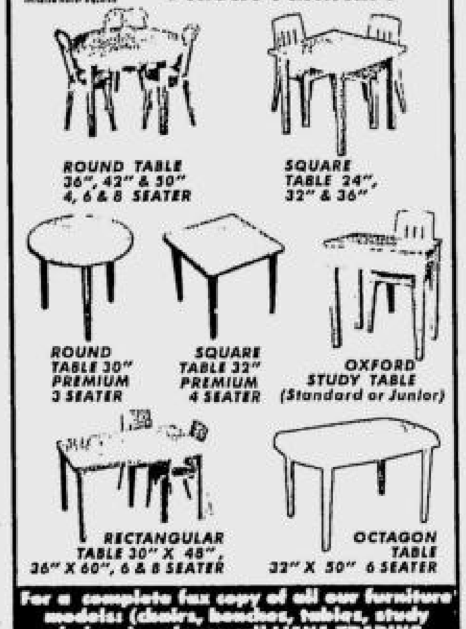
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Russia's security agency foils new terror attack in Moscow

MOSCOW—Russian law enforcement agencies have foiled a terror attack in Moscow, the FSB security agency said Saturday, two weeks after a series of attacks killed more than 400 people within days in the country.

"As part of antiterror measures in Moscow and Russia, police and the FSB have found and defused explosive devices in cars in Moscow," FSB (ex-KGB) spokesperson Sergei Ignatchenko was quoted as saying by the Interfax news agency.

The explosives and mines were discovered in a car after police stopped it late Friday and became suspicious of the driver, who appeared to be under the influence of narcotics, he said.

Under questioning, the man confessed that he was promised $1,000 to drive and park that and another car onto Kutuzovsky Prospekt, a major thoroughfare in Moscow that many government officials use to get to their residences, he said.

FSB sappers defused the explosives in one of the vehicles overnight, as residents from neighboring houses were evacuated to a nearby school, NTV reported.

"We were sleeping and got a call around 5 a.m., I think," a woman told NTV. "They said there was the threat of a blast ... we quickly left."

The detained driver later died in hospital of a heart attack, unnamed police officials told Russian news agencies.

It was not immediately clear whether there were explosives in both of the cars about which the man told police—some news reports said the second car did not have explosives, while others said it had explosives but no detonators.

The incident came a fortnight after a week that saw four major terror acts on Russian soil, including a deadly school hostage taking in the southern town of Beslan that killed nearly 340 people, half of them children.

The school was seized a day after a woman suicide bomber blew herself up outside a metro station in Moscow, killing 10 people, and a week after the downing of two planes, which left 90 dead.

Responsibility for all of the violence was Friday claimed by notorious Chechen warlord Shamil Basayev, according to a rebel website. *AFP*

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Bush-Kerry debates seen as pivotal to poll outcome

WASHINGTON—Because Sen. John Kerry is the challenger and lags President George W. Bush in most national polls, he seems to have the most to gain from a strong performance in the upcoming fall debates. Some Democrats see the face-offs as the last chance for a Kerry breakout.

But presidential debates present pitfalls as well as opportunities.

Unscripted moments and gaffes can backfire on incumbent and challenger alike: Al Gore's heavy sighs in 2000, President George H.W. Bush's checking of his watch in 1992, Michael Dukakis' passionless answer to a question about the hypothetical rape and murder of his wife in 1988, President Gerald Ford's 13-year-early liberation of Poland from Soviet domination in 1976.

Barring any major developments in Iraq or on the terrorism or economic fronts, the debates could be even more important than usual this year because of their potential impact on remaining voters who still count themselves as undecided and because of the closeness of the race.

In a poll by the Pew Research Center, 29 percent of those surveyed said the debates would matter in deciding how they would vote on Nov. 2. Some 68 percent said their minds were already made up.

Those undecided voters could make a huge difference. According to a Nielsen survey, 46.6 million people watched the first debate between Bush and Gore in 2000. The second and third debates drew audiences of 37.6 million, and 37.7 million, respectively.

This year's debates "in totality are more important than the two conventions," said Democratic pollster Stan Greenberg.

"You could not go through the 2000 election without understanding that the debates matter. Al Gore went from a five-point lead prior to the debates to being five points behind after the debates," Greenberg said.

The candidates' differences are also more clearly pronounced this year than usual on major issues that divide the country: Iraq, job losses, rising health care costs and the mushrooming federal deficit.

"It will be one of the few times when George Bush will have to defend his record," said Kerry adviser Joe Lockhart, a former press secretary to President Bill Clinton. "He's proved very deft at slipping and sliding when it comes to his own record."

But University of Virginia political scientist Larry Sabato suggests that Bush will have one big advantage in that "he's constantly underestimated. This is where the intense dislike for Bush among Democrats backfires on them. They insist that he's dumb as a post, and when he demonstrates he's not, he wins."

Negotiations were continuing into the weekend between the Bush and Kerry camps over terms of the debates. The first one recommended by the bipartisan Commission on Presidential Debates is set for Sept. 30 at the University of Miami in Coral Gables, Florida.

The panel has recommended two additional presidential debates—Oct. 8 in St. Louis and Oct. 13 in Tempe, Arizona—and an Oct. 5 vice presidential debate in Cleveland.

The Kerry campaign has agreed to all four; the Bush campaign has been noncommittal. President Bill Clinton in 1996 agreed to only two debates in his race against Republican Bob Dole, and many expect Bush to follow the same route. *AP*

Blair was warned of chaos after Saddam, says paper

LONDON—The government was accused Saturday of "clearly misleading" the British public over plans for postwar Iraq after a newspaper reported that Prime Minister Tony Blair was warned a year before the invasion that postwar stability would be difficult.

Blair responded that the allies had had a plan for postwar Iraq, but it had been frustrated by insurgents in Iraq.

Citing government documents marked "secret and personal," The Telegraph newspaper said that Blair's chief policy adviser Sir David Manning warned Blair that US President George W. Bush had no answers to big questions, such as "what happens on the morning after."

The documents show Foreign Secretary Jack Straw had written to Blair a year before the conflict saying large numbers of troops would have to be committed for many years if order was to be maintained after the ousting of Saddam Hussein, the newspaper reported.

He wrote that nobody seemed to know what would happen after a war had been won, writing: "There seems to be a larger hole in this than anything," the Telegraph said.

Blair responded to the report Saturday while taking a break from Northern Ireland talks at Leeds castle, southeast of London.

"Having read in the papers that apparently I was warned of the chaos that was going to ensue in Iraq, I actually got the minute Jack sent me. It didn't do anything of the sort," Blair said.

"What it warned of was this: it's very important that we don't replace one dictator, Saddam Hussein, with another."

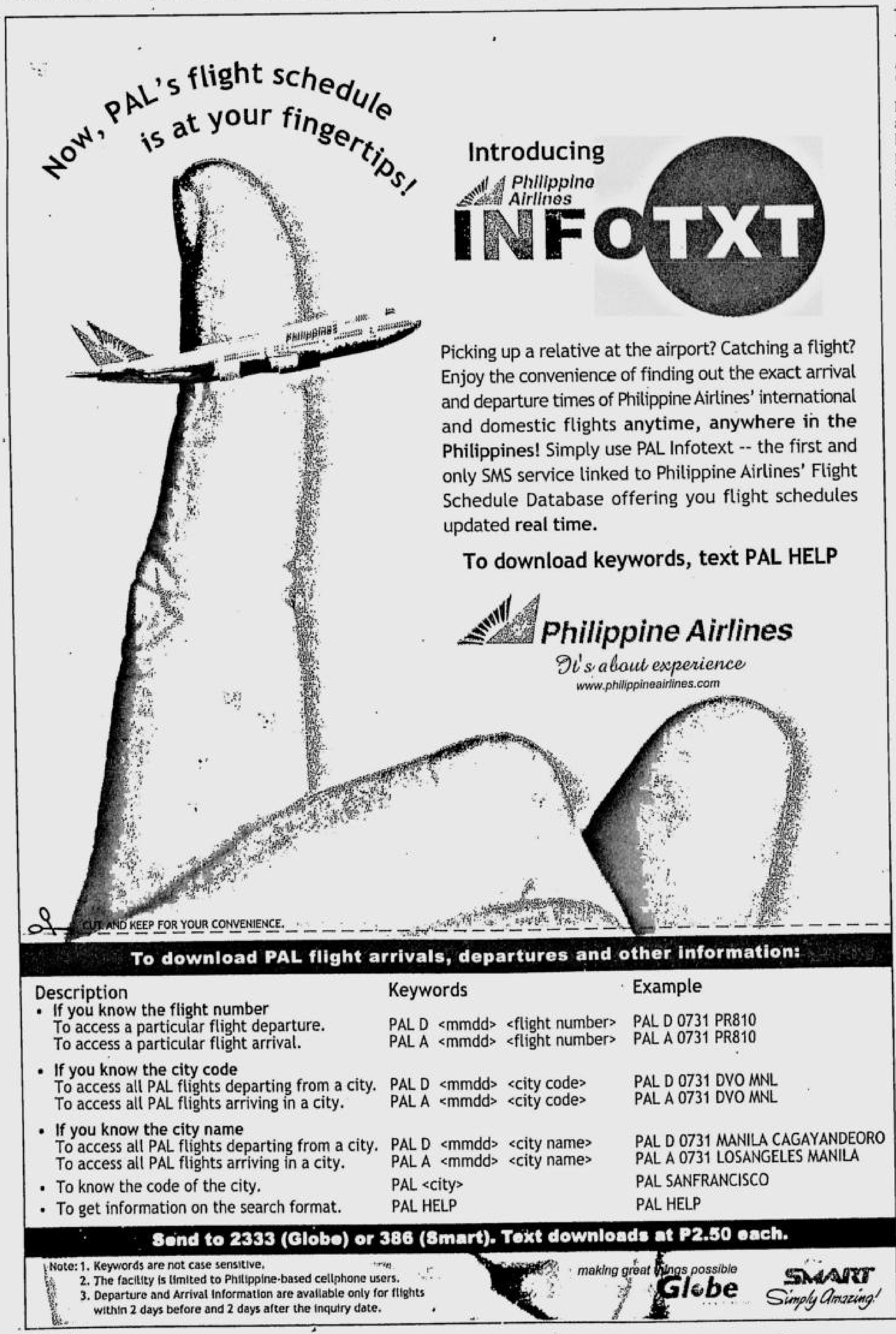
That is why, he said, the United States and Britain had sought United Nations "blessing" for elections "to guide Iraq to democracy."

"The idea that we did not have a plan for afterward is simply not correct. We did, and we have unfolded that plan, but there are people in Iraq who are determined to stop us."

Blair said Iraq was "the very crucible of the fight against terrorism, against groups that are prepared to kill, or take hostages, or do whatever they can in order to prevent Iraq becoming a stable, democratic country."

The Daily Telegraph said the documents showed Blair had signed up to the US policy of regime change in March 2002, a year before the conflict started.

"This underlines very starkly not only the reservations that existed in the (Foreign Office) about our ability to handle post-conflict Iraq, but also the lack of a comprehensive plan for the stabilization and reconstruction of Iraq, which we consistently called for before the war," said Michael Ancram, shadow foreign secretary for the opposition Conservative Party. *AP*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UN watchdog tells Iran to stop enriching uranium

VIENNA—The UN atomic agency called on Iran to "immediately" suspend all activities related to the enrichment of uranium as it also set a Nov. 25 deadline for a full review of Iran's alleged nuclear weapons program.

Iran reacted to the resolution Saturday by the UN watchdog International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) by saying it would cooperate but warned it may defy the agency's call to suspend uranium enrichment, the process for making fuel for nuclear reactors but also the explosive material for atomic bombs.

"The key thing is that Iran is now confronted with an ultimatum," nonproliferation expert Gary Samore told AFP in a telephone interview.

The compromise resolution worked out by the hardline United States and Europe's more conciliatory three main states, Britain, France and Germany, was "a victory for both American and European diplomacy," said Samore, a senior fellow at London's International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS).

Britain, France and Germany had submitted the resolution, strongly opposed by non-aligned countries which fear imposing a deadline on Iran to suspend uranium enrichment could set a precedent for depriving developing nations of peaceful nuclear technology.

"The resolution was adopted by consensus, without a vote," International Atomic Energy Agency spokesperson Melissa Fleming told reporters at a meeting of the IAEA's 35-nation board of governors, as the board voted not to consider the non-aligned movement's amendments to the text.

The United States claims Iran is secretly developing nuclear weapons and has been lobbying strongly for decisive action against the Islamic Republic.

Washington had pressed for an Oct. 31 ultimatum for Tehran to fully suspend uranium enrichment and report on its other activities to the IAEA, and for Iran to be automatically referred to the UN Security Council for possible sanctions if it failed to do so.

But in a compromise, the United States and the so-called Euro 3 set a Nov. 25 deadline for a full review of Iran's nuclear program and called on Tehran to "immediately" suspend all uranium enrichment activities, with this also being reviewed in November. *AFP*

Jiang expected to relinquish last official post

BEIJING—China's aging former paramount ruler Jiang Zemin is expected to give up his last official post when a high-level meeting of the ruling Communist Party ends later Sunday.

Jiang's predicted handover of the military to his successor Hu Jintao would complete the party's first bloodless transfer of power since the People's Republic was established in 1949.

The 198-member Communist Party Central Committee is expected to approve Jiang's resignation as chairman of the powerful Central Military Commission by the close of its secretive four-day meeting, party and diplomatic sources said.

The sources said there was much pressure within the central committee for the 78-year-old military chief to retire, following in the footsteps of late paramount leader Deng Xiaoping, who resigned as chairman of the military commission in 1989 in favor of Jiang.

According to communist party tradition a communique is expected to be issued later Sunday announcing any personnel changes.

Security at the venue, the party-run Jingxi Hotel in west Beijing, remained tight Sunday with police keeping traffic moving and shooing bystanders away.

At midday more than a dozen black sedans exited the hotel, with many heading in the direction of the party's Zhongnanhai headquarters in the center of the capital. Some two dozen large buses remained in the hotel parking lot, signaling that the conclave was still in session.

In Hong Kong, the South China Morning Post newspaper Saturday suggested Jiang could still wield influence even if he does resign his final post. It cited the example of Deng, who gave up all his official posts in 1989 but continued to hold power with no title for years.

"Mr. Jiang's retirement is unlikely to produce any major changes in domestic or foreign policies," it said. "But as Mr. Hu continues to consolidate his power and make his mark, subtle changes can be expected." *AFP*

South Africa's poor to get bank accounts

JOHANNESBURG—South Africa's major banks are reaching out to the 13 million poor who have no bank accounts, offering them a "Mzansi" seen as vital to advance black economic empowerment.

"Mzansi" account holders will enjoy low fees and no-fuss applications with banks that have been known to demand a myriad of documents including salary slips and proof of residency to do business.

"All you will need is an identity document and a very, very small deposit, around 20 rand," (US$3/2.50 euros), says Charles Chemel who is spearheading the project for the South African Banking Council, a watchdog group.

While South Africa boasts one of the most sophisticated banking sectors in the world, it is also saddled with the baggage of apartheid as former homelands set up for blacks have few banking outlets.

Giving poor South Africans access to a "Mzansi"—a Zulu word meaning south—fits into the objectives of President Thabo Mbeki's key policy of black economic empowerment that seeks to transfer some of the white-owned wealth into the hands of black South Africans.

A black economic empowerment charter for the banking sector that came into effect in January calls on banks to broaden access to financial services to blacks who were dispossessed under apartheid.

A study by the Reserve Bank last year showed that 72 percent of black South Africans do not own bank accounts compared to nearly 90 percent of whites who do.

Most of the "unbanked" were unemployed and those who did have a job lived in shacks or squatter camps in rural areas. Pensioners and students also formed a large chunk of South Africans without bank accounts.

Affordability was the main reason for staying away from banks that charge average service fees of around 40 rand ($5) per month, the study found. *AFP*

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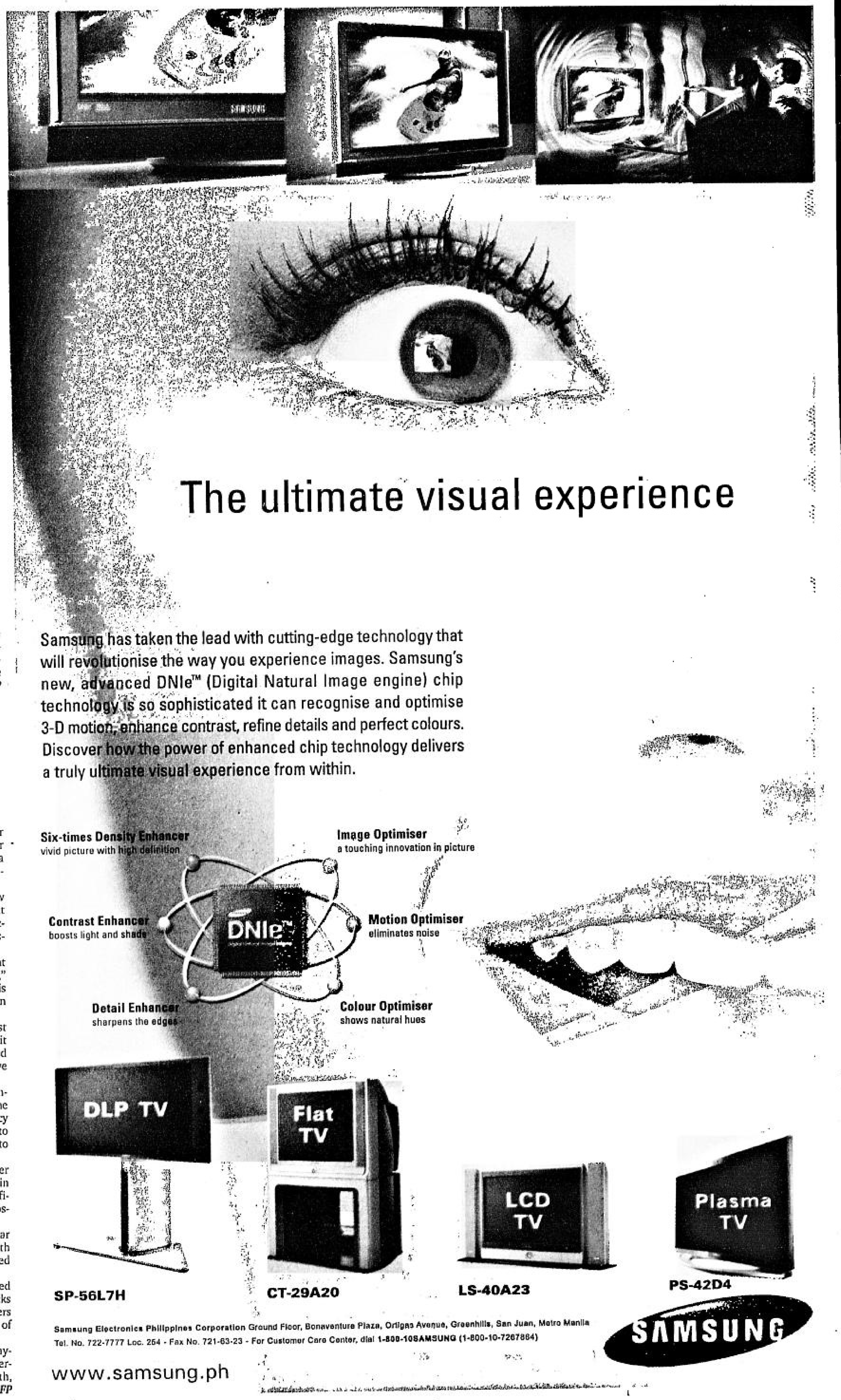
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Pay cuts

EDITORIAL

WE support the President's directive to all heads of government-owned and -controlled corporations to cut their pay. Some GOCC executives, President Macapagal-Arroyo said last Friday, had in fact already agreed to take "voluntary pay cuts while reorienting their respective organizations to the imperatives of discipline and effectiveness."

We shall see. This is not the first time that the issue of excessive pay has hit the headlines. In June 2001, Ms Arroyo issued Executive Order 20, setting a cap of P100,000 a month on the salaries of GOCC executives. But the recent list of the 100 best-paid executives in government service, topped by the P9-million salaries of the chair of the Philippine National Oil Company and the chair of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, covers the years 2002 and 2003. In other words, after EO 20 took effect.

Inevitably, the ghost of political will raises its hoary head again. If the President failed to implement her own order at a time when her mandate consisted mainly of the reformist Edsa II agenda, what makes her think she will succeed this time?

Her own reading of her new post-election mandate runs against the principles of self-sacrifice she now invokes. From her analyses of her victory, to her appointments to the Cabinet and other sensitive posts, to the term-sharing arrangements in both chambers of Congress that she encouraged among her allies, the President has been nothing but political. She has recognized her many debts of gratitude, and is actively finding ways, sometimes very creative ways, to pay them.

These actions contrast markedly with the new, post-crisis-declaration rhetoric of shared pain, of graduated sacrifice.

Does this mean the new cut-your-pay-or-else-you're-fired directive issued last Friday is doomed to fail? Not necessarily.

The use of the word "crisis" is a milestone; the President will be loath to turn back, after willing herself to get to the point where she could use the c-word. And the decision to make the eight new tax measures the centerpiece of her legislative agenda is a true fork in the road; she has risked political convenience by taking the road less taken.

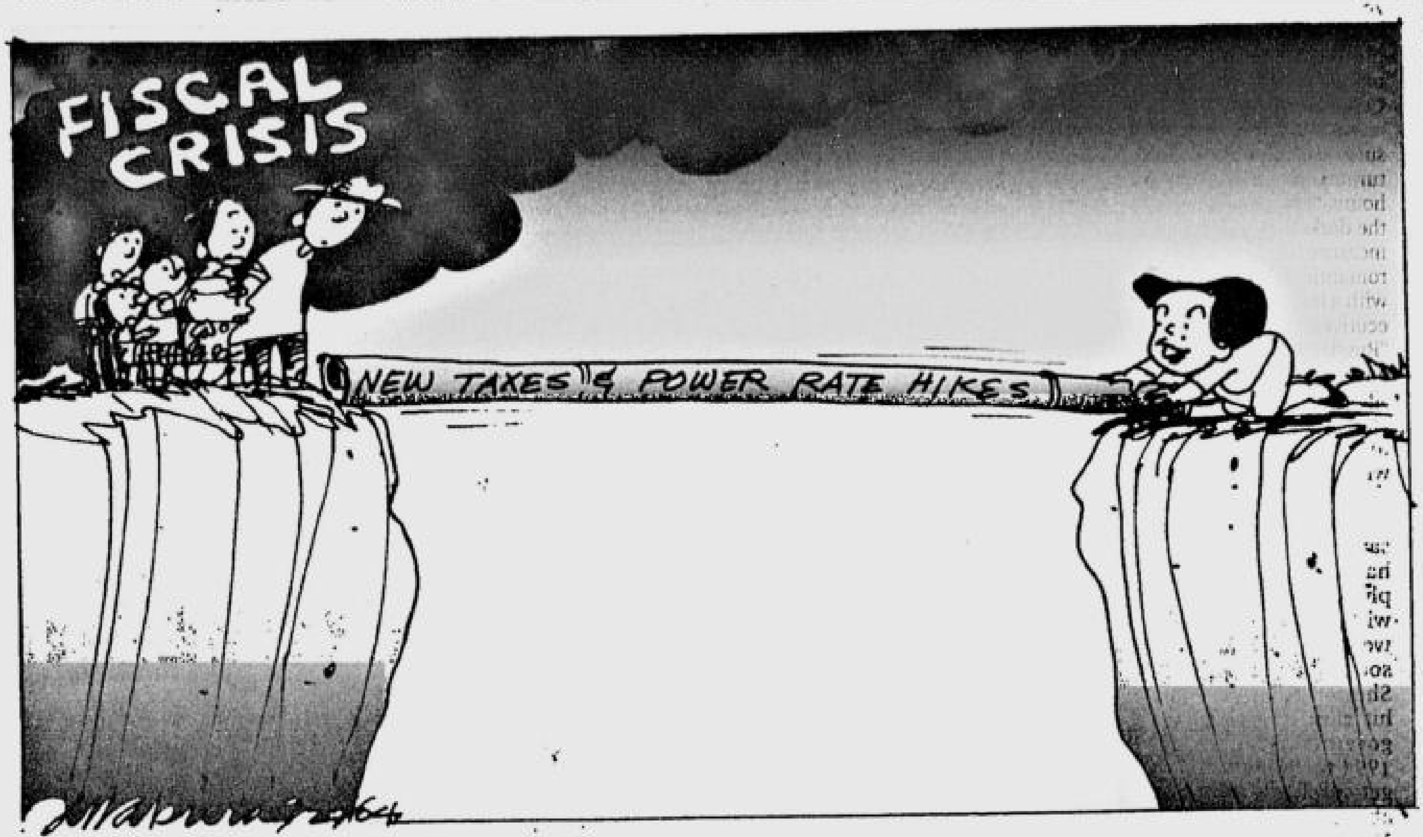
Burdening the straight-shooting budget secretary with the responsibilities of the now-defunct Presidential Committee on Effective Governance is also a flexing of political will. Secretary Emilia Boncodin is now tasked to go over the controversial sector, "GOCC to GOCC," to make sure that they comply with the pay cuts. "I told [Boncodin], if they defy my authority, then they are disobeying, which could be a ground for removal," the President said. To belabor the obvious, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye issued a statement which read, in part: "This campaign will be based on a compliance scorecard on pay cuts and austerity measures among the GOCCs. This will be a tool for deciding who among the presidential appointees would stay or leave."

We cannot imagine that the checking of the compliance scorecard will take too long. If we parse the President's own management-speak, we find that lack of discipline and effectiveness—in other words, lack of performance—is something she already assumes. Will we have to wait another year before we see well-paid heads roll?

We think that Boncodin and the President already know which GOCC fat cats have been napping on the job. Many of them have used their nine lives in the first three years of the Arroyo administration. It is time to be rid of them.

Let's begin with a simple test. Which of the GOCC heads already in office between 2001 and 2003 followed EO 20? As far as we can tell, only SSS administrator Corazon de la Paz cut her pay to fit the guidelines (contrary to the careless grandstanding of a sidelined Cebu politician, Sen. Sergio Osmeña III, who accused De la Paz of doing the opposite). What does that make of the rest? Sergio Apostol and Honeygirl de Leon are no longer with the PNOC or the PCSO. But the scion of a Cebu political family, Winston Garcia, is still chair of the Government Service Insurance System. Last week, he decided to cut his pay to P160,000—a classic case of doing too little, too late.

What would Boncodin make of him? The answer to this and similar questions will determine whether the President's new campaign will meet the fate of the old.


FISCAL CRISIS
NEW TAXES & POWER RATE HIKES

A begging republic; a beggar-President

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THE ALLEGED "strong republic" has become a begging republic. And the President, whom an American magazine included among the "most powerful" women in the world, has become a beggar-President.

The government itself prohibits begging—huge billboards warn the poor and Good Samaritans alike against the giving of alms to beggars. But it has resorted to begging to save itself from a looming financial disaster. After "extorting" P1 million apiece from a group of mostly Filipino-Chinese businessmen trapped in a jetliner (for the so-called Bayanihan Fund), the government is now begging each of the 50,000 top taxpayers to pay P1 million more. For being such good taxpayers, the President will punish them by dunning them for another P1 million apiece, while the tax evaders continue to get a free ride.

Wouldn't it be better to tell them to pay the correct taxes instead of begging for contributions? According to estimates, there is about P200 billion in uncollected taxes lying out there.

The businessmen want tax credits—to be used to pay future taxes—in exchange for their contributions. So there really would be no increase in the government's tax income. And we have had such a sorry experience with tax credit certificates.

The President is also begging members of Congress to agree to a cut in their pork barrel; and the fat cats in government-owned and controlled corporations to voluntarily cut their excessive salaries. Why does she have to beg them when all she has to do is remove the appropriations for pork from her proposed budget? If she is really the "powerful President" that the Americans think she is, she should not be afraid of the members of Congress. If there is no pork appropriation in her budget, then that is the end of it. Congress cannot increase the proposed budget she submits; it can only decrease it.

But the truth is she has submitted a P10 billion budget for pork to keep the congressmen happy. Only they're not happy with just P10 billion. They want P20 billion!

She has asked GOCC officials to voluntarily cut their scandalously high salaries. But since it is voluntary, they will not do that. Some of them will take token pay cuts for show, but they will still retain their excessive allowances, bonuses and other perks. For the salaries are only the tip of the iceberg. A big part of their take is hidden, just like the hidden allowances of the members of Congress, especially committee chairmen (that is why they're fighting for chairmanships), and Cabinet members. That is why some congressmen volunteered to give up their salaries, for show. Their salaries are peanuts compared to their hidden allowances.

What the President should do is issue an executive order standardizing the salaries and allowances of GOCC officials while waiting for Congress to pass an omnibus salary scale for GOCCs. Why should a GOCC official get a salary bigger than a Cabinet member, Supreme Court justice, and even the President herself?

They say that GOCC officials should get salaries at par with those of their counterparts in the private sector. But there is a difference in the public and private sectors. In the private sector, when a corporation doesn't earn a profit, its top officials are fired by the board of directors. They get fat salaries and bonuses only when the corporation is making big profits. For the directors have a stake in the corporation—they are part owners and shareholders.

In our GOCCs, however, the directors and top officials are politicians, protégés, and camp followers being rewarded for helping the President win the elections; they stay on and on even if the corporation is being run to the ground. They couldn't care less for the corporations; they care only for what they can get from them while they're in the saddle.

The reason there is so much abuse and wastage in Congress and in the GOCCs is that we have forgotten the principle that law/rule-making bodies should not be given the authority to increase their own benefits. That is why the Constitution prohibits members of Congress from increasing their own salaries.

But legislators—and executive and GOCC officials—have surreptitiously increased their own benefits. Thus, they have so many allowances and other perks that they no longer have any need for their salaries. The pork barrel is only the biggest and most corrupt.

For such a corrupt system, it is a wonder why our supposedly responsible leaders have allowed it to remain for generations. I was still a student when the Philippines Free Press under Teodoro M. Locsin was already fighting the pork barrel. Instead of abolishing or reducing it, the congressmen increased it and disguised it under innocent-sounding names. It is now P200 million for each senator and P65 million for each congressman, hundreds of times more than the original allocation. The lion's share of the budget of the Department of Public Works and Highways now goes to the pork barrel of legislators. The DPWH has steadily lost control of its own budget. The legislators now control it. Legislators are now de facto secretaries of public works, usurping the authority and functions of the Cabinet member.

And yet the Constitution clearly delineates the authorities and functions of the three branches of government: Congress legislates, the executive branch executes, and the judiciary interprets (the laws). So why are the legislators performing the jobs of the executive departments? Because of corruption. They get kickbacks from favored contractors.

Never again

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I'M glad that there seems to be renewed interest in what happened 32 years ago. Several networks called me up asking to interview me for something they were doing on martial law, whose anniversary falls tomorrow.

I worry, however, about a question I've heard a couple of times, which apparently many people, particularly the generation that went through martial law, are asking today. Namely, whether we were not better off then than now. Marcos at least built roads and bridges, they say, which has not happened to any comparable extent since. And prices were stable throughout the 1970s, if not the early 1980s, which has happened even less afterward. Then, wages went a long way toward putting food on the table.

Well, you can't blame people entirely for thinking this way. These are hard times, and hard times are always an invitation to looking at the past with rose-tinted glasses. But it's also a most dangerous way of doing so, the next step being to pine for iron-fisted rule which is presumed to accomplish things democracy cannot. The latter I have heard intermittently since 1986, people wondering—not least Fidel Ramos and his cabal of ex and not-so- ex-generals—if authoritarian government, with a Lee Kuan Yew rather than a Ferdinand Marcos at the helm, were not the cure to our plight.

Nothing is more delusional. True enough, prices were stable throughout the 1970s. The price of rice, *balut* and beer did not stray much from one another. I'm not so sure now how much a case of beer went then. I do know it didn't go up by much before the 1980s. As well as most goods. But there was a time bomb ticking underneath this.

That time bomb was the debts Marcos incurred throughout this time. The early part of the 1970s was the period when the Western banks groaned with petrodollars, which were the deposits the oil producing countries were dumping on them. The banks in turn dumped the petrodollars on the Third World countries—many of which were ruled by tyrants, courtesy of America's support for them—which guaranteed that the loans would be paid whatever happened to them or their countries. To this day, we continue to reel from that guarantee in the form of "automatic appropriation," the sum automatically deducted from our national budget—even if the poor have no food on their tables—to pay for our debts.

The roads and bridges Marcos built may look impressive when you compare them to those put up by his successors, but they are pathetic when you compare them to the resources he had and to the infrastructure put up by the other Southeast Asian leaders from their own loans. I get depressed every time I leave the country and am greeted by the stark contrast between the Ninoy Aquino International Airport and the airports of other Southeast Asian countries. Transparency International lists Marcos as the second most corrupt tyrant in the world, next only to Suharto; he stole some $15 billion—compared to Suharto's $35 billion—which we are paying for to this day. And though Suharto was the bigger crook, he was at least the more patriotic one. Unlike Marcos, he did not stash his loot outside but plunked it in various businesses in Indonesia. That is a monumental difference.

The point is simple: It is simply not true that Marcos supplied bread in lieu of freedom. He supplied neither. The seeming economic stability of the 1970s was just that, seeming. It was a surface placidity that rested on roiling waters. Or for those who do not like metaphors, it was a temporary stability bought at the price of a great catastrophe in the future. The future came in the early 1980s when the banks began to collect and cronies like Dewey Dee ran off with their own loot to pleasure capitals of the world.

Someone asked me why we continue to blame Marcos for our woes today. My answer is: Why the hell shouldn't we? Of course, subsequent leaders have made a mess of things, but why shouldn't we blame the fellow who made the worst mess of all? Marcos' tyranny ran deep and continues to ravage the country to this day. It's my same answer to the question why we continue to blame colonialism for our servile mentality today. Of course, we've messed up our minds, too, but why shouldn't we blame those who messed them up most of all? Colonial tyranny ran even deeper and continues to ravage our thinking to this day. Look at President Macapagal-Arroyo.

None of this includes the horrors martial law wreaked on the nation—the loss of freedom was the more patent. What Marcos did to Julio Nalundasan, his father's bitter enemy, decades earlier—which was to fell him with a sniper's bullet while he brushed his teeth—Marcos did to Philippine democracy decades after—which was to waylay it with dictatorship while it slumbered. The deaths are too plentiful to recount, most of them buried in the not very shallow graves of national forgetfulness. Particularly decimated was the youth, many of them the best and brightest in the country.

Someone asked me if Marcos did not at least replace freedom with discipline during martial law. Well, he did have all those slogans on TV that said, "*Sa ikauunlad ng bayan, disiplina ang kailangan* (To achieve progress, a nation has to have discipline)." And in later years, we had Asyong Aksaya to teach the public by negative example to shun the ways of profligacy. The problem though was that Marcos wanted only the public, and not himself and his cronies, to practice discipline and austerity. The best teacher, of course, is example: Asyong Aksaya can no more teach frugality to others than Asyong Pasista can teach responsibility to them.

One is tempted to say "Never again" to all these things. But some, if not all, of them are happening even as we speak. And few are raising their voices to stop it.

Palace in 'romantic' mood these days

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

IN RECENT weeks, the nation has become engrossed with the financial situation, and ordinary citizens now mouth terms like "budget deficit," "debt cap" and "fiscal crisis." Believing that talking about the problems will help deepen the citizens' understanding, Cecile Alvarez and I invited Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin to our dzRH program. I'm glad she was able to accommodate us despite her hectic schedule testifying in Congress.

We asked Boncodin about the cost-cutting measures being undertaken in Malacañang, such as turning off the air-conditioning system at certain hours. "*Mainit talaga,*" she admitted, adding that the darkening of Palace corridors as a cost-cutting measure has triggered a common joke there: "*nasa* romantic mood *tayo ngayon*." She also related with a laugh how, during a meeting with GOCC executives, the President announced the serving of a "Russian dinner," which turned out to be some rice and a piece of chicken in plastic plates and utensils. The Department of Budget and Management chief stressed that such small measures, contrary to the perception that they may not mean much, will save P2 billion to P5 billion.

* * *

Secretary Boncodin also stressed that in saying we have a "fiscal crisis," GMA might have merely wanted to raise a kind of a "typhoon signal" about the need to be cautious with our finances. *Wala pang* fiscal crisis, but if we don't watch out, we will have a real one soon, she explained. So what's the problem? She pointed to the budget deficit—expected to hit close to P200 billion this year—and the government's debt. She noted that in the years 1994 to 1997 the government enjoyed a budget surplus. Unfortunately, we have been unable to recover from the Asian crisis of July 1997 as fast as our neighbors. Year 2002, in fact, saw the highest deficit. And while 2003 exhibited a lower deficit due to the austerity and belt-tightening measures adopted by the Arroyo administration, the government revenues raised were not enough to help cover the debts of the 76 GOCCs, which are covered by sovereign guarantees.

* * *

The GOCCs, said Boncodin, are "*parang anak ng gobyerno, hindi pwedeng pabayaan.*" But she admitted that their debts were not closely supervised by the executive branch in previous years. Another difficulty is that the GOCCs have their respective charters.

She said GMA has admonished the GOCCs to "increase your income and decrease your costs," reminding them as well that they are in public service, not for themselves. She cited the example of the National Power Corp. which downsized its work force from 12,000 employees to 4,000; and its plan to privatize all generation plants by next year. At least, she stressed, the government is doing something about Napocor.

* * *

With regard to the eight tax measures the administration wants Congress to pass, I asked Boncodin which are in her top list of "must-pass." She mentioned the proposal for tax amnesty, which has the "biggest prospect" for raising revenues, and the proposed "sin taxes" on alcohol and cigarettes, estimated at P14 billion, which she said, are the lowest in Asia. Boncodin also wants to prioritize the measure rationalizing fiscal incentives. She explained that in our setup, the two professional groups earning the biggest incomes—the lawyers and the doctors—enjoy VAT exemption. She wants that revoked now by Congress.

* * *

In a recent chat with Alfonso Cusi, general manager of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport—also designated by the President as chief of the Manila International Airport Authority—it was noted that his office has supervision over all international airports in the country. Our conversation inevitably turned to the state of Naia 3, which was mothballed nearly two years ago by the administration and whose contract with the builder, Piatco, was subsequently nullified by the Supreme Court. Since those developments, many citizens and groups have pressed the government to open Naia 3 because the old airport has become rather shabby and they are concerned that, unused, the Naia 3 facilities might deteriorate.

* * *

Cusi admitted that the aging condition of Naia 1 has made it difficult to maintain higher standards and that it would be "in the best interest of the country" to operate Naia 3 as soon as possible. He said various avenues are being explored toward that direction and he hoped these would be amicable and fruitful. We certainly hope so. I maintain that the government erred in mothballing it, as it would have been more sensible to negotiate the correction of certain "onerous" provisions in the Piatco contract; but it would be a bigger mistake not to open Naia 3 now.

* * *

At a recent cocktail function, I ran into Cynthia Carreon, deputy executive director for travel trade and promotions and sports tourism of the Philippine Convention and Visitors Corp. She also acts as the physical fitness adviser of the President. Cynthia said that despite her busy schedule, GMA makes it a point to take time on Tuesday and Friday afternoons for a workout session with some ladies in the Palace. Under Cynthia's direction, they do some dancing, aerobics, stretching and muscle-toning. This explains, she said, why GMA, at 57, remains fit and full of stamina despite her workload.

I was glad to hear that, for I too am a firm believer in fitness and regular exercise, and I do a half-hour brisk walk daily on soft ground—rain or shine—and try my best not to miss it.

Butuan of a thousand years

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Antonio J. Montalvan II

ALL history is local, merged into the one we call by the misnomer "national history." A misnomer because what we currently refer to as "national history" is in fact local. "Manila local" for the most part, that is. Until we look beyond that myopia and recognize that the national struggle is a conglomeration of local discourses that, when blended together, form the national discourse of the Filipino people, then we shall remain fragmented, no more than a consortium of regional peoples that only happen to be a state.

And that is why all attempts at local historiography must be a cause for celebration. Much more so when it is the product of fine research. There is such a product, a recent book, the outcome of concerted local efforts. It should open the eyes of Manila historians to what simple pride of place can do.

"Butuan of a Thousand Years," by Butuan historian Greg Hontiveros, recently came off the Ateneo de Manila University Press. The title is a chronological catch-all and hints of what national history has been missing all along. More than a thousand years ago, Butuan already lay along the route of the trade winds that reached a peak in Southeast Asia around 900 to 1100 A.D.

The *balanghai* or Butuan Boat in the National Museum of the Filipino People at the Luneta is just a tiny speck in the vast historical galaxy with which Butuan has enriched Philippine history. The abundance of artifacts excavated in Butuan over the last few years should move back our historical chronology—to about 200 years earlier.

Hontiveros' description of Butuan's trade connections at once gives an indication of what little we actually know: "So extensive was Butuan's trading links with her Asian neighbors that a quantitative survey of the ceramics discovered would reveal the following: Chinese (10th-15th centuries A.D.), Khmer/Cambodian (9th-10th centuries A.D., Thai (14th-15th centuries A.D.), pre-Thai Satingpra (900-1100 A.D.), Haripunjaya (800-900 A.D.), pre-trade Vietnamese (11th-13th centuries A.D.), and Persian (9th-10th centuries A.D.)."

Chinese annals show that as early as October 1003, the Butuan king was already sending trade missions to the Chinese emperor who, at one time, received a gift of native Butuan products and red parrots. In February of 1004, the emperor had the Butuan envoys fetched for the Chinese New Year Festival. In 1007, the Butuan king again sent another mission to China, bringing tortoise shells, camphor, cloves, mother-of-cloves and other native products.

Today, we are either amused at or peeved with the news that, in her state visit to China, President Macapagal-Arroyo brought along her daughters-in-law and grandchildren and their nursemaids. At least, we know that our ancestors were better ambassadors.

We make a lot of bones about European colonizers coming to our shores in search of spices. But it has become clear from belated accounts that Butuan was in the middle of the "spice emporium" long before the Europeans heard of it. Proud Butuan residents have been heard to claim: "Long before there was Philippines, there already was Butuan." Now we know this is true.

The other absorbing part of the Hontiveros book—which sadly even the National Historical Institute has not resolved credibly to this day—is the continuing debate on the site of the first Christian Mass in the Philippines: Was it in Limasawa or Butuan? To answer this question, Hontiveros uses a wealthy array of primary historical sources, mostly acquired from reputable European archives and libraries.

For the first Mass could neither have been in Limasawa nor Butuan. Pigafetta's "Mazzaua" island was placed at latitude 9° 1/3' N or 9° 20' N. There is no island at that latitude between Limasawa and Butuan Bay. Limasawa Island, in fact, is further up north at 9° 55 00' N.

A team of Filipino geologists and archaeologists conducted a geomorphological study of the Butuan area in 2000 and 2001. The study came up with an astonishing finding, to say the least. The experts determined that in a temporal perspective of 45,000 years of land formation in Butuan, an island once existed in the area roughly corresponding to the Pigafetta latitudes of the so-called Mazzaua (where the first Mass was celebrated on that Easter morning of March 31, 1521). However, centuries of gradual siltation after Magellan's visit fused the island with the mainland.

Those who are in rabid pursuit to resolve the first Mass controversy, and those who so far tend to rely on the "Limasawa arguments," may not have to agree with Hontiveros' data. But, as in a court of law where a previously resolved case can be reopened in the event of new testimony, the burden may now be on the NHI to review the case in the interest of historical truth. Unfortunately, none among our history experts may be able to resolve the impasse. What the NHI can do, however, is to call for Magellan scholars and navigation historians for this is, first and foremost, a navigational issue.

A Manila television host once sneered at this controversy, saying that we shouldn't be bothered about where the first Mass was held, anyway she herself was not in the habit of going to Mass. There are many ways that Manila certainly does not speak for the rest of us in the provinces. There also are many ways by which Manila must listen to us. Reading "Butuan of a Thousand Years" could be one of them.

* * *

Comments to monta@sni.ph

Lost generation

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

BRITISH writer H.G. Wells wrote that when Queen Victoria died, it was as if a large paperweight had been lifted off a desk, resulting in a lot of papers blown about in all directions. A similar image comes to mind when it comes to martial law: the dictatorship was like a heavy paperweight that kept everything in place by virtue of its oppressive weight; once it was gone, the country was like a stack of papers scattered by the wind all over, in confusion.

Martial law was a great divide; even today, it separates all that came before, from all that has come since. Our history before 1972, when you think of it, represents the profound influence ideas and intellectuals can impact on a nation. The history of the Philippines since martial law has been marked by the steady bankruptcy of ideas and those who propagate them in our society.

The ideas—and ideals—of the propaganda movement; the motives and motivations of the revolution; the adaptation of the heritage of both in our attempt to reclaim our independence; the great thoughts that tried to give meaning and relevance to independence once reestablished in 1946: our country's story has been the story of thoughts, of ideas that moved the sectors that constitute our nation.

But after 1972, ideas and the intellectuals and ideologues who make them have increasingly been sidelined in the story of our national life: not least because so many intellectuals sold out or were deluded into supporting the dictatorship. The dictatorship, too, in wrecking the economy and turning us into a nation of overseas workers, virtually liquidated our middle class as a moving force of national development, and guaranteed that fewer and fewer Filipinos would have the capacity to be inspired, much less motivated, by ideas. Even people power, as we have seen in the 21 years since Ninoy Aquino's assassination, has never been fully formed, made truly workable, as a motivational idea. We have tried to make people power part of our lives, but its principles are so vague, its applications so unclear that we have gotten to be unsure if it was ever a real thought at all. People power was—is—perhaps, more of an emotion than a genuine idea.

Why haven't we been able to come up with ideas that can move us, help us make sense of our national condition, and improve our country? The answer may lie in the way martial law put an end to the intellectual development—the rise of ideas—that previously characterized the evolution of our nation. From the generation of Rizal, to that of Bonifacio and Mabini, to Aguinaldo, Rafael Palma, Osmeña, Quezon and Roxas and Recto, Ramon Magsaysay, and on to Macapagal in politics; from the propagandists, the first Filipino socialists, and then the new generation of communists in the 1960s, and the reformers who came of age also in the 1960s, the development of ideas in our country was constant, its most obvious manifestation being the steady replacement of one generation by the next in both political and intellectual matters. From 1972, to 1986, however, only one man and his pretensions to ideas mattered for most Filipinos: that of Ferdinand Marcos. Those with contrary thoughts, with possibly worthy ideas, were either imprisoned, put on the run, sent to exile, or killed during that period. And as the thinkers were sidelined, those who might have imbibed those ideas were driven off to work abroad, or given an increasingly inferior education at home.

When you think of how Ferdinand Marcos' generation (he was born in 1917) was poised to be replaced by Ninoy Aquino's generation (he was born in 1933) as long ago as 1972; and how it took until 1998 for another member of Ninoy's generation (Joseph Estrada, born in the same decade) to take over the reins of government, you get to appreciate just how the handover of leadership from one generation to the next was delayed due to martial law. Although Cory Aquino also belonged to Ninoy's generation, her rise to power was not accompanied by a transition to young leadership. It turned out instead to be the delayed assumption of power by those who were poised to assume it in 1972 —with all the exhaustion (spiritual, mental and moral) caused by the delay.

The fact is, during the First Quarter Storm, a transition from one generation to the next was in the works; while the generation to follow was poised to begin exercising its creative energies preparatory to eventual assumption of leadership. Instead of allowing this natural succession to proceed, Ninoy's generation was made to wait; the generation of young radicals in turn has had to wait also. Too much waiting cannot do any good in such a situation: by the time a person of ideas is finally allowed to try to make a difference, the ideas that motivated him shall have either become irrelevant or shall have been tainted by the bitterness of delay.

The sterile, poisonous triumph of martial law can be measured in the way that—despite its having put to an end—Sept. 21, the false date it chose for its beginning, is the date even its enemies and survivors commemorate. The big lie that was the antedating of martial law to Sept. 21 obscures the actual signing of the martial law declaration on Sept. 22, and the arrests made in the dawn of Sept. 23.

But beyond the enduring falsity of martial law, the billions stolen, the thousands killed, it is the way our country's growth since then has been robbed of the power and influence of ideas that we should truly mourn for. We are a nation so pillaged we can no longer think.

* * *

Comments welcome at www.quezon.ph

Crime suspect

READERS' ADVOCATE

Raul J. Palabrica

CRIME stories are considered ordinary stuff in most newspapers, the INQUIRER included. The section of the newspaper where these reports come out depends, among others, on the personalities involved and the manner by which the crime was committed.

Last Sept.4, the INQUIRER published on its front page the photos of Nestor Silang who jumped from an overpass on Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City, while holding in his arms his one-year-old son. The child died from internal injuries, while Silang survived with broken legs. Silang was charged with the crime of parricide and has been denied bail while his case is on trial.

The entire incident was caught on video and film. The TV evening news that day replayed the event several times. The following day, the radio commentators were one in condemning Silang for his act. Before the viewing public, Silang was guilty beyond reasonable doubt for killing his own son.

The correct description of Silang—suspect or criminal—in media reports was a puzzler of sorts to reader Bryan Sotelo. He wrote: "When reading newspapers, I often find it confusing when I read the words 'suspect' or 'suspected.' Because here in the Philippines, those words automatically connote guilt, although that should not be the case.

"I want to know if it is proper to use the word 'suspect' to describe a person if the whole nation has already seen him or her on video commit the crime? Or should the word 'perpetrator' be used instead? As I understand it, the word 'suspect' is equivalent to 'alleged perpetrator' and is lesser in intensity than the word 'perpetrator.' Please correct me if I am wrong."

Public show

The reader's observation that people who are named as crime suspects in our country are presumed or looked at as guilty is correct. Some law enforcement authorities have this habit of presenting crime suspects to the media and showing the "evidence" that supposedly proves their culpability for the crime being imputed to them.

To add drama to the media presentation, the relatives of the victims are sometimes brought into the scene and allowed to vent their ire on the suspects. Once in a while, the suspects are given the opportunity to explain their side. But the overall effect of the coverage, especially if aired on television, is the viewers already make conclusions about the guilt of the people who allegedly committed the crime.

I recall that during the last Congress, a congressman filed a bill prohibiting the public presentation of crime suspects by the police because the act violates the constitutional provision that all persons are presumed innocent unless proven guilty.

The measure did not go beyond the first reading or referral to a congressional committee for study. Our congressmen probably felt the bill was too minor to merit their precious time and attention.

In spite of protests by various sectors of our society, this "crime-solving" technique continues. The publicity that the activity often generates—which gives the impression to the public that the authorities are doing their job efficiently—is just too much to resist for some law enforcement officials.

What's sad is, if the criminal charges are ordered dropped or the suspects are later acquitted, hardly any news about that vindication comes out in the media.

Presumption

I believe the presumption of innocence remains even if the public has seen a person commit a crime, as in the case of Silang. That person cannot be considered guilty until his culpability for the offense is resolved with finality by our courts.

In the case of a trial court, its judgment is deemed final when its decision is not appealed by the accused within the prescribed period. For verdicts that are appealed or are automatically reviewed by the Supreme Court, the finding of guilt becomes final when the appeals court renders its judgment.

The fact that Silang was caught on film and video to have caused the death of his son is no guarantee that he will be found guilty of parricide by our courts. He can escape criminal liability if he is able to prove that he was insane at the time he grabbed his son and jumped from the overpass.

Although a crime may have been committed, no criminal liability arises when the responsible party was not in control of his mental faculties at the time of the commission of the crime. In such a situation, the suspect will only be ordered confined to a mental institution for appropriate treatment. There is a possibility that he will be released to rejoin society if he completely regains his sanity.

Thus, during a suspect's trial, I think the correct way to describe him in news reports is either "suspect" or "accused." I seriously doubt if "perpetrator" would be a correct term considering that the word connotes that he has been found to be the person who committed the crime in question. In my opinion, adding the word "alleged" before "perpetrator" will not make any difference; the stigma of guilt still attaches in spite of that qualifying word.

Now comes the question of how to describe the suspect after he is found guilty by a trial court. Unless he waives his right to appeal and opts to serve his sentence, I think he should continue to be described as "accused" or "suspect" because there is still no final determination of his guilt. For all we know, a higher court might acquit him after taking another look at his case.

There is an easy way out of this issue: simply refer to the accused by his surname in subsequent references to him in the news. Let the readers or TV viewers decide for themselves whether to call him "suspect" or "convict."

* * *

The readers' advocate may be reached at the following address: "The Readers' Advocate" c/o Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City. Or through fax nos. 897-4793 to 94, or readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph.

THEY SAID

Too late

"Had I known, I would have gladly given him all of it."

—National athlete Sandra Araullo on the meager allowance she gets from the government, upon hearing that co-athlete Perlito Ibañez committed suicide due to financial and personal problems

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Providing women with more options

IN CONNECTION with Dr. Sylvia Estrada-Claudio's letter, "Secretary Dayrit's mistaken views," (PDI, 9/7/04) may I make the following clarification:

First of all, it has never been my job or the job of the Department of Health to buy contraceptives. All contraceptive supplies, distributed free of charge through the government health care system in the past, were donated to the Philippines by foreign governments or organizations. After many years of this, many Filipinos have come to equate the government's role in maternal and child health and responsible parenthood with the available approaches employed in only one of the many essential elements of maternal and child health and responsible parenthood. It does not spell out the totality of the DOH's work in this area.

Admittedly, the focus of the Commission on Population in the 1970s was the promotion and distribution of contraceptives. However, PopCom has since evolved into a more enlightened agency that addresses a myriad other population issues within its mandate, such as migration, human development, population and environment, human settlements, etc., even as it continues to acknowledge the importance of contraceptive distribution. Rather than work in a small box, the present-day PopCom now works as a coordinative agency within a broad matrix of capabilities and services available in various government agencies and units.

Statistics will show that the prevalence of contraceptive use has leveled off, and there is really no massive clamor among the Filipino people to have more and more free contraceptives. The observations that hormonal preparations were used for gardening, and that stocks of unwanted contraceptives just took up space in storerooms, are not just urban legends, but facts. Thus, financial resources, allotted by foreign donors to assist the government's programs, could actually be better spent in other pursuits than purchasing contraceptives.

We should also demystify our perceptions about the role of contraceptives in women's health, women's rights and healthy families. To equate access to contraceptives with the reduction in maternal morbidity and mortality is simplistic. Equally flawed is the much-publicized argument that women are accorded the rights they deserve when they are made to use contraceptives.

The majority of women who use these products are not wholly aware of the many effects they have on their health and lives, and of the other approaches that are available to them. Our government is now intent on providing much more than the options available in the past. It will also ensure adequate and honest information on the various modalities or approaches families can choose to ensure their health and well-being.

It is our belief that women's rights, reproductive rights, and the right to health can only be realized within an environment of informed choice.

—MANUEL M. DAYRIT, M.D,
secretary,
Department of Health,
San Lazaro Compound,
Rizal Avenue, Sta. Cruz, Manila

'Good roads' need maintenance, repair

IN CONNECTION with the letter, "Repairing good roads," (PDI, 8/2/04) based on a report from our National Capital Region office, we would like to inform the public that the cited repair works are being undertaken under the preventive maintenance program for year 2003. Most of the road pavements along Katipunan Avenue, especially on the Southbound lane (going to the Libis area), have already scaled and bear minor cracks.

Repair works on specific portions are started on a Friday night and are targeted for completion within the next two days so as to make the roads passable on the following Monday.

—JENNIFER D. PUNZALAN,
officer in charge,
Public Information Division,
Department of Public Works
and Highways, Manila

Deplorable condition of SUCs

WHILE we share your deep abhorrence for corruption, the reason by which you attribute the fiscal crisis is one-sided. ("Oink, oink," PDI editorial, 8/29/04) The government's adherence to globalization (i.e. tariff reduction, huge tax incentives for foreign investors) and bias for big business largely contribute to the fiscal crisis.

We do not question the reports on the use of the Priority Development Assistance Fund. However, it is wrong to imply that the PDAF cannot be used for projects beneficial to the people.

While the editorial singled out Bayan Muna's project in the Polytechnic University of the Philippines, it did not bother to see how the student center will benefit the students. We believe the editorial's sarcasm is rooted in the INQUIRER's lack of knowledge on the deplorable condition of the PUP and other state universities and colleges (SUCs).

The PUP badly needs overhauling. To illustrate, the sixth floor of the main building in Sta. Mesa gets flooded during the rainy season. The sealants can no longer close the holes on the roof. Class sizes range from 60 to 80 students, forcing them to occupy the corridors during class hours. Some classrooms do not have lighting or ventilation. An inventory of the dilapidated facilities would be a long list.

The PUP, which has 14 branches and 56,000 students, suffers from a meager subsidy. The Department of Budget and Management has proposed to allot P545.34 million for the PUP next year, an amount P2.6 million less than its budget this year.

Because of low subsidy, school charges have been increased by 67 percent to 100 percent. New fees have been imposed for such matters as shifting form, verification of grades per subject, readmission fee, change of subject/curriculum/schedule. The majority of the PUP students are children of ordinary workers and farmers who find it difficult to pay even just the P12 per unit tuition fee.

The situation in other SUCs is no better. For 2005, the proposed budget for SUCs is only P16.85 billion. The DBM has proposed to give the Department of Education P111.04 billion. The total of these two allocations accounts for a measly 11.68 percent of the national budget for 2005. Ironically, the state's premier university will suffer the biggest budget cut. The University of the Philippines System's budget will be slashed by almost P67 million.

No, we do not wish to rely on our legislators' pork barrel to shoulder the national government's responsibility. We demand that the Arroyo administration prioritize education over debt-servicing and military expenditures. If only the Arroyo administration provided education and other social services for the people, we believe that progressive legislators from Bayan Muna, Anakpawis and Gabriela would find no use for the pork barrel.

—RIZZA RAMIREZ,
national president,
National Union of Students of the
Philippines, 32-A Visayas Ave.,
San Isidro St., Galas, Quezon City

Tired, disgusted and poor

THE ELECTIONS are over. The victors, the elected ones, are now rejoicing. Meanwhile, poor Juan de la Cruz starts—again—to wait for the fulfillment of their promises as he watches the so-called public servants easily transform themselves into masters of corruption and greed. As recent events show, they are doubtless dynamic only in enriching themselves through their positions; they are brilliant only as far as their welfare is concerned.

When it comes to the interests of poor Juan, many of our public officials become amnesiacs right after the elections. Self-proclaimed defenders of the oppressed and friends of the masses during the campaign, they turn traitors undermining Juan. And Juan has again to buckle down to work by his lonesome to save his children from hunger and poverty.

Is there still hope of changing the undesirable qualities of our politicians? Juan is now tired and disgusted. There is still a remedy. Dear God, help Juan to awaken the conscience of his "public servants" for the sake of the country.

—JULIO MANALO CUETO,
424 Diamond Rd.,
Perlas Compound,
Kumintang Ilaya, Batangas City

IF you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of news and photos by the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue, corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, City of Makati or send a fax to Nos. 897-4793, 897-4794, or e-mail readersadvocate@ inquirer.com.ph

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Flood victims seek gov't compensation

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

ARAYAT, Pampanga—The National Irrigation Administration bought 10 hectares of land in Barangay San Mateo here, spending almost P4 million since June although these were not occupied or affected by the operations of a Japanese-funded Cong Dadong Dam, documents showed.

But the agency has yet to pay damages to at least 81 tenants whose farms, covering 93 hectares, had been submerged by backflowing waters since the dam began operating in 2002, according to barangay councilor Hermilito Fernando, chair of the agriculture committee.

Water from the Pampanga River and Rio Chico had spread to the farms in San Mateo instead of entering the artificial channel created for the diversion dam. The farms had turned into swamplands.

Barangay councilor Florentino Salac said this happened because the NIA closed or partially opened the gates of the dam to maintain its maximum water level of 8.5 meters.

The newly acquired 10-hectare property, comprising Lots 1051 and 7, is located east of some of the submerged farms, maps showed.

Old earth dike

These are protected by an old but still functional earth dike and lined by irrigation canals. The INQUIRER on Saturday saw rice still planted in those lands. In contrast, waterlilies have grown on nearby flooded farms.

Pointing to what used to be his plot, tenant Ricardo Lising said he used to cultivate tomatoes there during the dry season and corn during the wet season.

"I've been unable to farm for almost two years now. That dam has made life very difficult for me and my family," Lising, who is in his 60s, said.

Some 4 km away, the dam loomed south of the village.

The NIA had paid him and 28 other tenants at least P5 per square meter in "financial assistance for submerged farms," according to a Feb. 28, 2003 letter from Antonio Garcia, assistant manager of the dam's builder, the NIA's Pampanga Delta Development Project.

Fernando, also a tenant, said he and 51 others have not received any financial help yet.

All of them are awaiting the promised damage compensation equivalent to P10 per square meter, he said. They are rushing to get the payments as the NIA announced it was wrapping up work for the PDDP.

Only the dam will be maintained to irrigate some 11,000 hectares of land in eastern Pampanga, PDDP Manager Reynaldo Mencias said.

In the case of the newly acquired 10 hectares, the NIA paid P38 for every square meter.

In Lot 1051, which is almost 5 hectares, the NIA charged the landowners P280,000 in "representation/legal assistance," documents showed.

Cong Dadong Dam made life difficult for us, say tenants

The agency deducted another P370,421 in taxes, including capital gains tax supposedly paid to the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

Right-of-way claims

Erlinda Libor and four other owners of Lot 1051 claimed they were "not aware" that the NIA acquired almost the whole property. She said they only got less than P150,000 each from the NIA.

In February, the PDDP requested P69.306 million for payments of right-of-way (ROW) claims on at least 351 hectares of land. The original ROW budget was P50 million, documents showed.

Mencias earlier confirmed the project had displaced 816 farmers in Arayat. He said in a phone interview he was verifying if the case of Lots 1051 and 7 was a likely window to alleged anomalous transactions on ROW.

Mencias, Garcia and cashier Lucia Quiambao were the signatories in checks for ROW payments.

The flooding of farms in San Mateo, Mencias said, was "not anticipated." Thus, he added, the compensation was not included in the project costs.

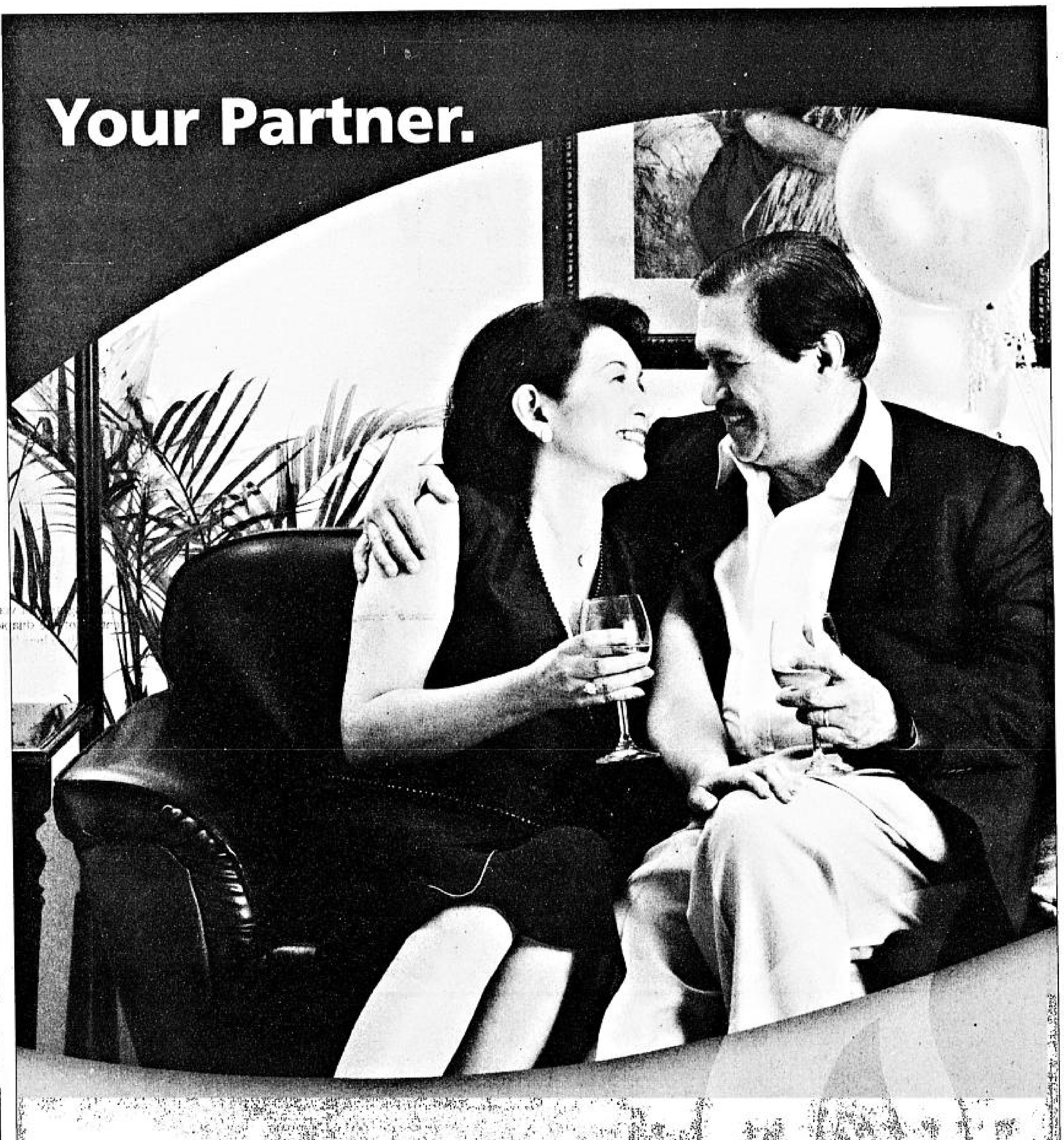
Requests for additional funds had already been made, he said.

The dam, built on a P3.4-billion loan from Japan, not only displaced many tenants in San Mateo. Barangay Councilor Randy Lustre said the floods last month were the worst to have hit the village since the floods in 1972.

"It reached up to chest high. For five days, we lived on the roofs of our houses," said Roberto Bonilla, 70.

Floods used to be below the waist and lasted only two days, he recalled.

The strong currents have eroded a 2-km stretch of the San Mateo banks, forcing many families there to move away.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ARMY soldiers from the Southern Luzon Unified Command join the cleanup on Dalahican beach in Quezon province.
DELFIN MALLARI JR./PDI SOUTHERN LUZON BUREAU

Environmentalists elated, dismayed at beach cleanup

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

LUCENA CITY—Environmentalists, who have been mustering the support of volunteer beach cleaners along the coast of Quezon province, expressed mixed feelings of jubilation and dismay during Friday's celebration of the 19th International Coastal Cleanup Day.

Juliet Borlon of the Tanggol Kalikasan, who coordinated the event, said the multitude that trooped to the village of Dalahican confronted not assorted litter but minimal trash.

"It's a wonderful Saturday morning compared to previous coastal cleanup days. It seemed that the residents have already learned the virtue of clean surroundings," Borlon told newsmen.

But in Barra Village near the delta of the city's main river that ends in Tayabas Bay, another member of Tanggol Kalikasan found that the close to 1,000 mangroves that were planted by volunteers two years ago had all died, apparently due to toxic waste coming from a factory upstream.

"It's a disgusting sight, especially on a day such as this when we commune with nature," said Janet Geneblazo-Buelo, who also hosts a weekly program, "Kasama ng Kalikasan," on radio dwTI.

She said her group would immediately conduct an investigation and file a case against the erring firm.

"Those mangroves represent a symbolical effort of volunteers to protect the environment, then they were just easily wasted because of irresponsible waste disposal," she said.

Picnic garbage

Borlon said thousands of volunteers—students, Citizens Army Training cadets, government and private employees, civic-minded residents, soldiers and policemen—joined the cleanup activities in the coastal villages.

Some of the volunteers came from as far as the coasts of Ragay Gulf and Lamon Bay, she said.

"Based on the initial feedback that I received and the low volume of trash along the shore, most of the coastal residents are now practicing coastal cleanup year-round," Borlon said.

"The garbage that we picked up was mostly left behind by picnickers," said Gary Palma, a senior at the Quezon National High School.

Staff members of Quezon Rep. Proceso Alcala, the prime mover behind the Tayabas Bay protection and rehabilitation, distributed flyers to the coastal residents, explaining the importance of garbage segregation.

"Educating the people and teaching them the virtue of clean surroundings is a continuing process and practice. We always have to remind the people," Alcala said.

Divers' version

He said the local group of divers would also conduct their own version of cleanup soon. "It's our annual underwater cleanup day."

Alcala said close to 100 artificial reefs had already been placed in different parts of the bay.

"During weekends, boatloads of youngsters could be seen having a field day harvesting different kinds of fish simply by means of hook, line and sinker. They sell the catch for their school allowance," Alcala said.

Esie Verso of the provincial Department of Environment and Natural Resources recalled that in the past, the beach fronting the rows of fishermen's shacks were littered with "grenades" or human waste.

"It is now a thing of the past," she said.

Marcel Magadia, Dalahican chair, said eight public toilets had been built in strategic parts of the barangay.

'We are sorry, no cleanup for us today'

By Delfin Mallari Jr.
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

LUCENA CITY—As the throng of volunteers swept the long shore of the Dalahican beach, at least 54 families occupying the southern end of the coastline could not help simply watching the yearly activity.

"Every year, we have also participated in the coastal cleanup. But this time, even if we want to join the volunteers, we simply can't because we are facing our own life-and-death battle. We are sorry, there is no cleanup for us today," Delia Naldo, 49.

Naldo's house was among those demolished last Wednesday by persons allegedly hired by a certain family that, residents said, was claiming the site as part of its six-hectare property in the adjacent area.

Heavily armed members of the city's police Special Weapons and Tactics (Swat) team allegedly assisted the demolition crew.

Court order

Most of the shacks were flattened to the grounds. Some children were seen still rummaging for whatever they could salvage inside the structures.

Naldo said the demolition crew arrived at around 9 a.m. "They just showed us a court order for the demolition. Most of us simply cried because all the males in the area were out either fishing or pedaling '*padyak*' (tricycle) for a living," she said.

The residents said that for a long time, they had been living in the area being claimed by two families. "But not one of them can show us proof, such as a title, that the land really legally belongs to them," Naldo said.

According to Marcel Magadia, barangay chair, the settlers and one of the families had been battling in court for several years already.

"Apparently, they lost the case, that's why the ejectment order was issued by the court. It's a legal question," he said. "They were duly informed of the impending ejectment even before the election. They could not feign ignorance of the case."

Relief assistance

Magadia said the local social welfare department and the barangay office had been assisting the displaced families.

Betty Riego, who claimed of having worked for the family for eight years, insisted that the site was no longer part of its property. "I know where their '*muhon*' (property line marker) is. Way, way far from our location," she said.

The menfolk said they were always on guard because of the threat that their shattered houses would be set on fire. "We will not leave this place unless we are fully convinced that this land really belongs to them," Naldo said.

Most fishermen in the area are members of the militant Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya sa Pilipinas or Pamalakaya, while the women are affiliated with Bayan Muna.

The residents have formed the "Kapatiran sa Dulong Buhangin."

"Formerly, this site was full of thorny aroma. But we developed this into a livable community," Naldo said.

"We also managed to maintain the cleanliness of the beach in front of us because we know that garbage thrown in the sea could affect the catch of our fishermen-husbands someday," she said.

She added: "The pristine beach also serves as the playground of our children."

The residents said they could not just simply raise their arms in surrender. "We have nowhere to go. What is being offered to us by City Hall is only temporary relocation in the abandoned airport in Barangay Ibabang Iyam," Naldo said.

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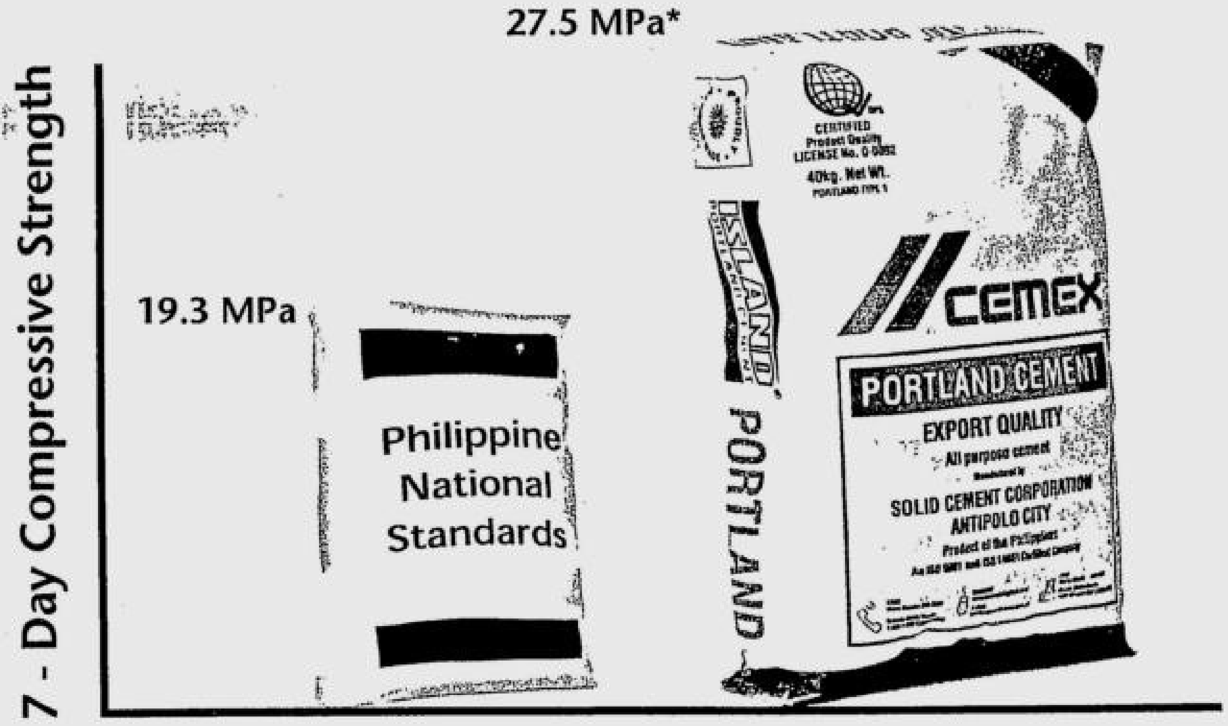

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House probe of US soldiers' part in raid urged

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Allegations of American servicemen participating in a military raid in Tawi-Tawi in May that led to the killing of three villagers may trigger a House inquiry, Deputy Speaker Gerry Salapuddin said.

But Salapuddin said he wanted Tawi-Tawi Rep. Anuar Abubakar to "file the necessary resolution in Congress so that we will have legal basis for a congressional inquiry in aid of legislation."

Earlier, villagers in Sitangkai town filed complaints of murder and human rights abuses before the Commission on Human Rights against four US servicemen, and Philippine military and police officials who raided Umapoy Island on May 25.

At least 11 islanders were rounded up and tortured, and three of them were later killed, they alleged.

Military officials have admitted that a raid was conducted on the island, but it was against Abu Sayyaf bandits hiding there. Then Southern Command chief, Lt. Gen. Roy Kyamko, said three bandits were killed and eight others were captured. There was no mention of any participation of US forces.

The residents, led by Barangay Sipangkot chair Aldo Bara, said those killed were not Abu Sayyaf members but seaweed farmers.

The US servicemen fired their machine guns at the villagers, they said.

Salapuddin said that if the charges were true, then the American servicemen violated the provisions of the Visiting Forces Agreement.

He said the presence of US troops in Mindanao were sanctioned by the VFA but only for joint RP-US military exercises, not actual combat operations with Filipino soldiers.

Akbayan Rep. Etta Rosales called on the Department of Foreign Affairs to conduct a separate inquiry "to determine the culprits or suspects who have been shooting those innocent civilians mistaken as Abu Sayyaf."

"They should be arrested. We are condemning the act, more so if there were American soldiers involved because it was not stipulated in the Visiting Forces Agreement," Rosales told the INQUIRER.

Anak Mindanao Rep. Mujiv Hataman said the DFA should also file a diplomatic protest over the reported participation of American soldiers in the operation in Tawi-Tawi.

Vice President Noli de Castro told reporters here Friday that he was inclined to wait for the result of the CHR investigation.

Southcom chief, Maj. Gen. Generoso Senga, denied that American troops were involved in the raid, which he described as a legitimate operation.

"On the part of the AFP, action was taken, there was investigation done and there was no finding of human rights violation," Senga said.

Jose Manuel Mamauag, CHR director for Western Mindanao, said the complainants were "very credible."

PO1 Montahal Que, a local policeman, "attested that American soldiers participated in the operation," he said. *Julie S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Soldiers capture NPA leader

DAVAO CITY—Government troops arrested an alleged leader of the communist New People's Army (NPA) in Sitio Malitbog, Barangay Nanyo, Panabo City, on Thursday afternoon.

Col. Eduardo del Rosario, Task Force Davao commander, said Manuel Ramos, alias Commander Pepoy, was arrested by virtue of several arrest warrants issued in connection with a string of criminal cases.

Del Rosario said Ramos, alleged head of the NPA's Front Committee 52, was involved in a series of bus and equipment burning cases and harassment of civilians in Marilog, Baguio and Paquibato districts here.

Members of the 73rd Infantry Battalion bagged Ramos at around 4 p.m. at his house in Purok 5 in Sitio Malitbog.

But a human rights group, Karapatan, described the arrest as illegal.

Ariel Casilao, Karapatan secretary general, questioned the enforcement of the arrest warrants, saying that the soldiers did not coordinate with the Panabo police.

Casilao said the incident was plain abduction after witnesses told them that the soldiers came in plainclothes, wore bonnets, and were on board a multicab without a license plate.

He claimed that Ramos' wife Dolores and 2-year-old daughter Mylene were taken.

But Del Rosario said Dolores and Mylene were not arrested. "They just went with Ramos when they were brought to the 73rd IB headquarters," he said. *Anthony S. Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

4 Negros women held by prostitution ring

BACOLOD CITY—Four Negrense women who were forced into prostitution were being held by a syndicate in Sabah, Malaysia, the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration said Friday.

Rep. Ignacio Arroyo (Negros Occidental, 5th district) said he was informed by the Owwa that the women were still in Sabah and efforts would be made to rescue them.

The women, who are natives of Hinigaran, Himamaylan, Cauayan and Candoni, were recruited to work in karaoke bars in Sabah but ended up in prostitution dens.

Provincial officials learned about their plight when one of the women was able to send a text message to Vice Gov. Isidro Zayco saying that they were duped by their recruiter and had become victims of white slavery.

Former provincial board member Enrique Montilla, who has been assisting Arroyo in the search for the four, said "the Owwa has confirmed that they are still in the clutches of a syndicate that has forced them into prostitution."

Arroyo said he would also seek the help of the Malaysian ambassador if this was necessary.

Former Rep. Apolinario Lozada, who now hosts the weekly "OFW Hotline" television show over ANC cable channel, said Malaysian Embassy officials had given assurance that they would trace the women.

Gov. Joseph Marañon advised women applying for jobs abroad to be careful so that they would not fall into the hands of unscrupulous recruiters. *Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau*

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING
OF THE STOCKHOLDERS OF
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Please be notified of the Annual Meeting of the Stockholders of the Pamantasan ng Araullo (Araullo University), Inc. to be held on 04 October 2004 at 3:30 p.m., at Araullo University, Cabanatuan City, with the following Agenda:

1. Call to Order
2. Notice and Quorum
3. Ratification of Appointment of External Auditor
4. Reading and Approval of Annual Report and Audited Financial Statements for Fiscal Year 2003-2004
5. Amendments of Articles of Incorporation and By-laws
6. Increase in Authorized Capital Stock
7. Reduction in Par Value
8. Election of Directors
9. Adjournment

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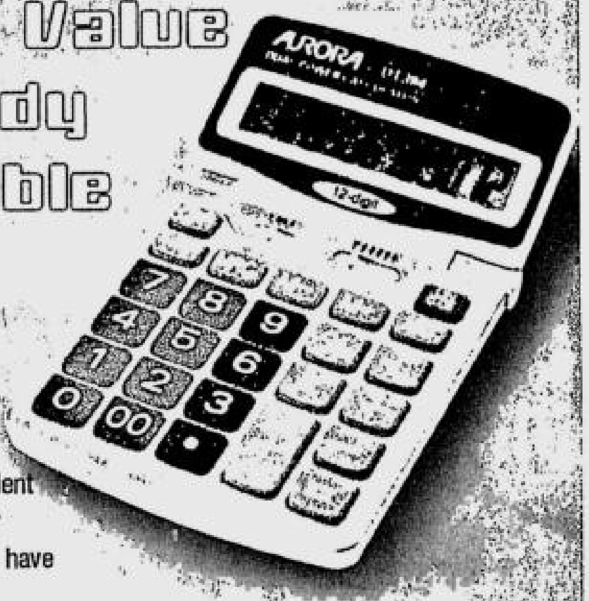

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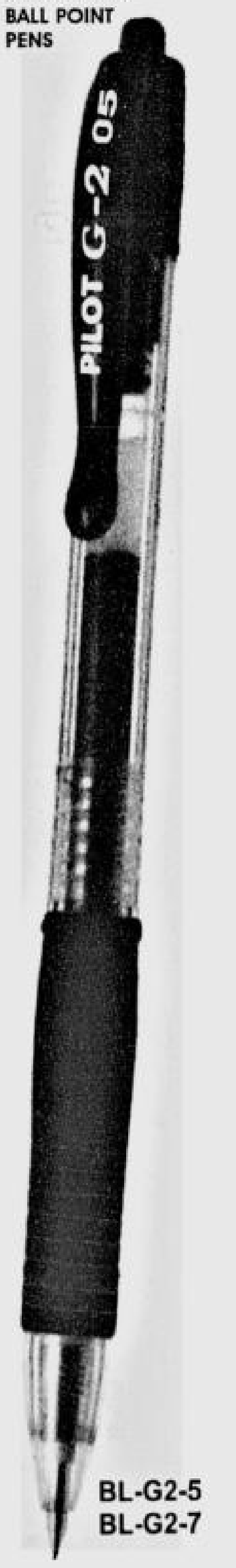

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INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Office 2000 (MSWord, MSExcel MSPowerPoint) P8,000/48hrs	6.00-9.00	M-Fri	Oct04-Oct25
Program Logic Formulation P6,000/30hrs	9.00-12.00	M-Th	Sep20-Oct05
	9.00-12.00	M-Th	Nov08-Nov23
	9.00-12.00	M-Th	Jan10-Jan15
	1.30-4.30	M-Th	Oct11-Oct26
	1.30-4.30	M-Th	Jan10-Jan25
	9.00-4.00	Sat	Sep24-Oct22
	9.00-4.00	Sat	Oct29-Nov26
Developing Web Animation using Flash P6,000/30hrs	6.00-9.00	M-Th	Oct04-Oct19
	6.00-9.00	M-Th	Nov15-Nov30
	8.00-3.00	Sat	Nov20-Dec18
Web Page Designing using Dreamweaver P8,000/30hrs	1.30-4.30	M-Th	Oct04-Oct19
	1.30-4.30	M-Th	Oct25-Nov18
	1.30-4.30	M-Th	Nov29-Dec14
	3.30-8.30	Sat	Nov13-Dec18
	3.30-8.30	Sat	Jan08-Feb12
Macromedia Flash ActionScript P8,000/30hrs	6.00-9.00	M-Th	Oct25-Nov10
	6.00-9.00	M-Th	Dec08-Dec21
	8.00-3.00	Sat	Oct16-Nov13
Microsoft Access P8,000/30hrs	6.00-9.00	M-Th	Oct04-Oct21
	6.00-9.00	M-Th	Nov08-Nov25
Visual Basic.Net Fundamentals P8,500/45hrs	9.00-12.00	M-Th	Nov29-Dec17
	9.00-12.00	M-Th	Jan10-Jan28
	6.00-9.00	M-Th	Nov29-Dec17
	8.00-3.00	Sat	Nov13-Jan15
	3.30-8.30	Sat	Nov13-Jan22
Programming in C++ P6,500/38hrs	9.00-12.00	M-Th	Oct11-Oct28
	9.00-12.00	M-Th	Dec08-Dec23
	1.30-4.30	M-Th	Sep20-Oct07
	1.30-4.30	M-Th	Nov08-Nov26
	5.30-8.30	M-Th	Sep20-Oct07
	5.30-8.30	M-Th	Nov08-Nov26
	9.00-4.00	Fri	Dec03-Jan21
	8.00-3.00	Sat	Oct16-Nov13
	3.30-8.30	Sat	Nov27-Dec18
Object Oriented Programming in C++ P8,600/36 hrs	5.30-8.30	M-Th	Oct08-Nov20
	5.30-8.30	M-Th	Dec08-Dec23
	3.30-9.00	Sat	Oct11-Oct28
JAVA Programming Fundamentals P7,500/42hrs	9.00-12.00	M-Th	Dec08-Dec23
	1.30-4.30	M-Th	Oct11-Nov02
	1.30-4.30	M-Th	Nov08-Nov30
	1.30-4.30	M-Th	Jan10-Jan27
	6.00-9.00	M-Th	Jan10-Jan27
Developing Applications in JAVA P7,500/42hrs	9.00-12.00	M-Th	Nov08-Nov30
	9.00-12.00	M-Th	Jan10-Jan27
	1.30-4.30	M-Th	Dec08-Dec23
Introduction to Oracle 9i, SQL P10,000/48 hrs.	8.00-12.00	MWF	Oct04-Oct29
	8.00-12.00	MWF	Nov08-Dec03
	9.00-12.00	M-Th	Nov16-Dec05
	9.00-12.00	M-Th	Dec20-Jan13
	6.00-9.00	M-Th	Oct04-Oct29
	6.00-9.00	M-Th	Nov08-Dec02
	9.00-4.00	Sat	Nov13-Jan16
Oracle 9i : DBA Fundamentals P12,000/60 hrs.	9.00-12.00	M-Th	Oct04-Nov08
	9.00-4.00	Sat	Nov08-Jan22
Network Technology P7,000/45hrs	9.00-4.00	M-Th	Oct04-Oct14
	9.00-4.00	M-Th	Oct25-Nov09
	9.00-4.00	M-Th	Nov15-Nov25
	9.00-4.00	M-Th	Dec08-Dec16
	9.00-4.00	M-Th	Jan10-Jan20
	6.30-8.30	M-Th	Oct18-Nov15
	6.30-8.30	M-Th	Nov22-Dec15
Administering Windows Networks P9,000/64hrs	9.00-4.00	M-Th	Oct18-Nov03
	9.00-4.00	M-Th	Nov08-Nov22
	9.00-4.00	M-Th	Nov29-Dec13
	8.00-12.00	M-Th	Jan10-Feb01
	8.00-5.00	Sun	Oct03-Nov14
	8.00-5.00	Sun	Jan09-Feb13
	9.00-5.00	Sat	Jan08-Feb26
Linux System Administration (Linux+) P8,200/45hrs	1.30-4.30	M-F	Oct25-Nov18
	1.30-4.30	M-F	Nov[illegible]-Dec10
	1.30-4.30	M-F	Jan10-Jan21
	1.30-4.30	M-F	Jan10-Feb04
	8.00-5.00	Sun	Jan09-Feb13
Linux Network Administration P6,500/30hrs	9.00-12.00	M-F	Oct25-Nov09
	9.00-12.00	M-F	Jan10-Jan21
	6.30-9.30	M-F	Nov24-Dec08
	10.00-6.00	M-F	Dec13-Dec17
	10.00-6.00	Sat	Nov08-Dec04
	9.00-5.00	Sun	Nov07-Dec19
SQUID P2,000/8hrs	6.30-9.30	W&Th	Nov03-Nov04
	5.30-9.30	W&Th	Dec08-Dec09

AUTOMOTIVE/RAC

Basic Driving Course P6,000/16hrs	8.00-12.00	M-F	Sep20-Oct01
	1.00-5.00	M-F	Sep20-Oct01
	8.00-5.00	M-F	Dec08-Dec21
Auto Engine Electrical P3,000/42hrs	9.00-12.00	M-F	Oct04-Oct21
	5.30-8.30	M-F	Oct04-Oct21
	8.00-5.00	Sat	Oct09-Nov06
	9.00-12.00	M-F	Nov16-Dec03
	5.30-8.30	M-F	Nov16-Dec03
	8.00-5.00	Sat	Nov13-Dec18
Auto Body Electrical P3,600/48hrs	2.00-5.00	M-F	Oct04-Oct25
	8.00-5.00	Sat	Oct09-Nov13
	2.00-5.00	M-F	Nov15-Dec07
Gas Engine Mechanic P4,200/60hrs	9.00-12.00	M-F	Oct04-Oct29
	2.00-5.00	M-F	Oct04-Oct25
	8.00-5.00	Sat	Oct09-Nov27
	9.00-12.00	M-F	Nov16-Dec13
	2.00-5.00	M-F	Nov16-Dec13
Diesel Engine Mechanic P4,200/60hrs	2.00-5.00	M-F	Oct04-Oct29
	5.30-8.30	M-F	Oct04-Oct29
	2.00-5.00	M-F	Nov16-Dec13
	5.30-8.30	M-F	Nov16-Dec13
Basic Car Maintenance P2,800/30hrs	2.00-5.00	M-F	Oct04-Oct16
	800-5.00	Sat	Oct09-Oct30
	2.00-5.00	M-F	Nov15-Nov26
	800-5.00	Sat	Nov13-Dec04
Electronic Fuel Injection Servicing P4,200/48hrs	5.30-8.30	M-F	Oct04-Oct26
	9.00-12.00	M-F	Nov15-Dec07
Underchassis Mechanic P3,800/60hrs	5.30-8.30	M-F	Nov16-Dec13
Automatic Transmission Mechanic P4,200/00hrs	9.00-12.00	M-F	Oct04-Oct29
	9.00-12.00	M-F	Nov16-Dec13
Refrigeration and Aircon Mechanic P4,500/60hrs	9.00-12.00	M-F	Oct04-Oct29
	2.00-600	M-F	Oct04-Oct29
	5.30-8.30	M-Th	Oct04-Oct29
	800-5.00	Sat	Oct23-Dec11
	9.00-12.00	M-F	Nov16-Dec13
	5.30-8.30	M-F	Nov16-Dec13

INSTRUMENTATION

Pneumatic Industrial Controls P4,800/42hrs	5.30-8.30	M-F	Oct04-Oct22
	5.30-8.30	M-F	Nov15-Dec03
	1.30-8.30	Sat	Nov13-Dec18
Electro-Pneumatics P4,800/42hrs	5.30-8.30	M-F	Oct25-Nov12
	8.00-4.00	Sat	Oct02-Nov06
	5.30-8.30	M-F	Dec08-Dec21
	8.00-4.00	Sat	Nov13-Dec18
Basic PLC P4,800/42hrs	5.30-8.30	M-F	Oct04-Oct22
	8.00-12.00	M-Th	Oct25-Nov12
	1.30-8.30	Sat	Sep29-Nov02
	8.00-4.00	Sun	Nov07-Dec12
	5.30-8.30	M-F	Nov15-Dec03
	1.30-8.30	Sat	Nov27-Jan15
Advance PLC P5,400/42hrs	8.00-12.00	M-Th	Oct04-Oct21
	5.30-8.30	M-F	Oct25-Nov12
	8.00-4.00	Sat	Oct02-Nov02
	8.00-12.00	M-Th	Nov15-Dec03
	5.30-9.00	M-F	Dec08-Dec21
	8.00-4.00	Sat	Nov13-Dec18
Calibration for Process Instrumentation P4,600/36hrs	5.30-8.30	M-F	Oct04-Oct22
	8.00-3.00	Sat	Oct02-Nov06
	1.00-4.30	M-F	Oct25-Nov12
	5.30-8.30	M-F	Nov15-Dec03
	8.00-3.00	Sat	Nov13-Dec18
Industrial Process Controls P4,800/36hrs	1.00-4.30	M-F	Oct04-Oct22
	5.30-8.30	M-F	Oct25-Nov12
	1.30-7.30	Sat	Oct16-Nov20
	5.30-8.30	M-F	Dec08-Dec21
	1.30-7.30	M-F	Nov27-Jan15
SCADA Visualization using Wonderware Infouch P4,800/36hrs	8.00-12.00	M-F	Oct25-Nov05
	8.00-3.00	Sat	Oct02-Nov05
	8.00-3.00	Sun	Oct17-Nov21
	8.00-12.00	M-F	Dec08-Dec16
	8.00-3.00	Sat	Nov13-Dec18
	8.00-3.00	Sun	Nov28-Jan16
Process Automation Course P8,600/72hrs	5.30-8.30	M-F	Oct04-Nov12
	5.30-8.30	M-F	Nov15-Dec21
Machine Automation Course P12,600/126hrs	5.30-8.30	M-F	Oct04-Dec03
	5.30-8.30	M-F	Nov15-Feb04

ELECTRONICS

Basic Electronics P3,900/36hrs	8.00-12.00	M-Th	Sep27-Oct11
	8.00-12.00	MThF	Oct18-Nov03
	1.00-5.00	M-Th	Sep27-Oct11
	1.00-5.00	M-Th	Oct18-Nov03
	5.30-8.30	M-Th	Oct04-Oct21
	8.00-5.00	Sat	Oct09-Nov06
	8.00-5.00	Sat	Oct09-Nov06
	8.00-12.00	M-Th	Nov08-Nov22
	8.00-12.00	MThF	Nov29-Dec17
	1.00-5.00	M-Th	Nov08-Nov22
	1.00-5.00	M-Th	Nov29-Dec14
	5.30-8.30	M-Th	Nov29-Dec17
	8.00-5.00	Sat	Nov20-Dec18
	8.00-5.00	Sat	Nov20-Dec18
Microcomputer Hardware Fundamentals P4,300/36hrs	8.00-12.00	MWTh	Sep27-Oct14
	8.00-12.00	MWTh	Oct18-Nov08
	1.00-5.00	MWTh	Sep27-Oct14
	5.30-8.30	MWTh	Oct18-Nov08
	8.00-5.00	Sat	Oct09-Nov06
	8.00-12.00	MWTh	Nov08-Nov25
	8.00-12.00	MWTh	Nov29-Dec16
	1.00-5.00	MWTh	Nov08-Nov25
	5.30-8.30	MWTh	Nov29-Dec16
	8.00-5.00	Sat	Nov20-Dec18
Microcomputer Hardware Servicing P4,600/36hrs	8.00-12.00	MWTh	Sep27-Oct14
	8.00-12.00	MWTh	Oct18-Nov08
	1.00-5.00	MWTh	Oct18-Nov08
	8.00-5.00	Sat	Oct09-Nov06
	8.00-12.00	MWTh	Nov08-Nov25
	8.00-12.00	MWTh	Nov29-Dec16
	1.00-5.00	MWTh	Nov29-Dec16
	8.00-5.00	Sat	Nov20-Dec18
Advanced Microcomputer Hardware Servicing P4,600/36hrs	5.30-8.00	M-Th	Oct04-Oct19
	8.00-5.00	Sat	Oct09-Nov06
	5.30-8.00	M-Th	Nov08-Nov23
	8.00-5.00	Sat	Nov20-Dec18
Television & Monitor Servicing P3,[illegible]00/36hrs	5.30-8.30	M-F	Sep27-Oct12
	5.30-8.30	M-F	Oct18-Nov04
	8.00-5.00	Sat	Oct09-Nov06
	5.30-8.30	M-F	Nov08-Nov23
	5.30-8.30	M-F	Nov29-Dec16
	8.00-5.00	Sat	Nov20-Dec18
Practical Cellular Phone Servicing P4,800/27hrs	5.30-8.30	M-F	Oct18-Oct28
	8.00-5.00	Sat	Oct09-Nov06
	5.30-8.30	M-F	Nov08-Nov18
	5.30-8.30	M-F	Dec08-Dec18
	8.00-5.00	Sat	Nov20-Dec18
Home Video Editing P3,300/18hrs	8.00-12.00	Sun	Nov07-Nov28
	8.00-3.00	Sun	Dec05-Dec19
Applied Telephony P3,600/36hrs	8.00-12.00	Sat	Nov07-Nov28

ELECTRICAL

Industrial Electrician P4,500/68hrs	8.30-12.00	M-Th	Oct25-Nov19
	1.30-5.00	M-Th	Oct25-Nov19
	5.30-9.00	M-Th	Oct25-Nov19
	8.00-5.30	Sat	Oct16-Dec04
	8.00-5.30	Sun	Oct17-Dec05
	8.30-12.00	M-Th	Dec01-Dec28
	1.30-5.00	M-Th	Dec01-Dec28
	5.30-9.00	M-Th	Dec01-Dec28
Building Wiring Installation and Maintenance P4,500/60hrs	8.30-12.00	M-Th	Oct20-Nov23
	5.30-9.00	M-Th	Oct20-Nov23
	8.00-5.00	Sat	Oct23-Dec11
	8.30-12.00	M-Th	Dec01-Dec28
Electrical Control Wiring Installation and Troubleshooting P4,500/48hrs	5.30-8.30	M-Th	Oct20-Nov22
	8.00-5.00	Sat	Nov06-Dec11
	5.30-8.30	M-Th	Dec01-Dec28
Motor and Transformer Rewinding P4,500/60hrs	5.30-9.00	M-Th	Oct26-Nov25
	8.00-5.00	Sat	Oct23-Dec11
	5.30-9.00	M-Th	Dec01-Dec28
AutoCAD P4,800/72hrs	8.30-12.00	M-F	Oct26-Nov23
	1.00-5.00	M-Th	Oct25-Nov24
	5.15-8.15	M-Th	Oct26-Nov24
	8.00-5.00	Sat	Oct30-Jan08
	8.00-5.00	Sat	Nov06-Jan09
	8.30-12.30	M-F	Dec01-Dec28
	1.00-5.00	M-Th	Nov29-Dec29
	5.15-8.15	M-Th	Nov29-Dec29
Advanced Industrial Motor Control P4,500/60hrs	5.30-9.00	M-Th	Oct20-Nov23
	8.00-5.00	Sat	Oct23-Dec11
	5.30-9.00	M-Th	Dec01-Dec29

MECHANICAL

Lathe Machine Operation P7,000/40hrs	5.00-8.00	MTThF	Oct04-Oct20
	8.00-5.00	Sat	Oct09-Nov06
	5.00-8.00	MTThF	Nov15-Nov30
	8.00-5.00	Sat	Nov20-Dec18
Milling Machine Operation P7,000/40hrs	5.00-9.00	MTThF	Oct04-Oct20
	8.00-5.00	Sat	Oct09-Nov06
	5.00-9.00	MTThF	Nov15-Nov30
	8.00-5.00	Sat	Nov20-Dec18
Basic CAD/CAM P4,500/40hrs	5.30-8.30	M-F	Oct04-Oct21
	8.00-5.00	Sat	Oct09-Nov06
	5.30-8.30	M-F	Nov15-Dec02
	8.00-5.00	Sat	Nov20-Dec18
CNC Milling Programming P4,500/40hrs	5.30-8.30	M-F	Oct04-Oct21
	8.00-5.00	Sat	Oct09-Nov06
	5.30-8.30	M-F	Nov15-Dec02
	8.00-5.00	Sat	Nov20-Dec18
Gas Welding Cutting & Brazing P5,500/40hrs	5.30-8.30	M-F	Oct04-Oct21
	8.00-5.00	Sat	Oct09-Nov06
	5.30-8.30	M-F	Nov15-Dec02
	8.00-5.00	Sat	Nov20-Dec18

APPLIED ARTS AND SCIENCES

Enhancing Comm. Skills P3,500/21hrs	9.00-5.00	Sat	Oct02-Oct16
	9.00-5.00	Sat	Nov13-Nov17
Creating Preventive Maintenance Systems P3,500/21hrs	9.00-5.00	Sat	Oct02-Oct16
	9.00-5.00	Sat	Nov13-Nov17
Customer	9.00-5.00	Sat	Oct02-Oct16

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Administering Windows Network Infrastructure P9,000/48hrs	6.00-9.00	TWTh	Oct19-Nov24
CISCO 1 P8,000/70hrs	5.30-9.30	MWF	Oct04-Nov15
	6.30-9.00	T&Th	Sep21-Nov25
	1.00-5.00	T&Th	Oct11-Dec03
CISCO 2 P8,000/70hrs	1.00-5.00	T&Th	Sep21-Nov18
	5.30-9.00	T&Th	Sep21-Nov25
CISCO 3 P8,000/70hrs	9.00-5.00	Wed	Sep22-Nov24
	6.00-9.30	M&F	Sep20-Nov29

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Lawmaker urges legalized 'jueteng' to ease fiscal crisis

From page A1

Interior Secretary Angelo Reyes when he voiced support for the legalization of the illegal numbers game.

Dominguez said the government's admission that the country was in fiscal crisis made the legalization of jueteng "more plausible and attractive."

"(If we) legalize all numbers games, local government units can generate an income and do away with their internal revenue allotments," he said.

Dominguez, chair of the House games and amusement committee in the 9th and 10th Congress, said that 10 years ago, his committee prepared reports that the government was set to earn as much as P12 billion from legalized jueteng. He, however, did not explain how the committee arrived at the figure.

"In 1994, when we made our comprehensive consultations across the country, jueteng was based only in Luzon because the Visayas had *masiao* and Mindanao had 'ending,'" Dominguez said.

"Now jueteng is rampant. (It's) everywhere," he said.

Dominguez's bill includes other illegal numbers games such as *masiao, bolalai* (which is based on jai alai) and ending (based on the Philippine Basketball Association's final game scores).

Under Dominguez's scheme, the government would get 40 percent of the gross income from jueteng, while the *kubrador* (collector) or bookie would get 10 percent and the operator, 50 percent.

The government's take would be divided among the municipal government (20 percent), the provincial government (10 percent) and the national government (10 percent).

As for a chartered city, it will get 30 percent while the remaining 10 percent would go to the national government.

The *cabo* (chief collector) and *rebisador* (bet reviewers) will be eased out because the current setup in towns and cities shows that they are responsible for rigging jueteng draws, according to Dominguez.

"Actually, one of the main purposes of the bill is to protect the betting public. Drawing the winners nowadays is not transparent," he said.

The *cabo* and *rebisador* look at the number combinations that have the least number of bets and make them the winners, he said.

"Computerizing the process would draw more bettors," he said. "Once jueteng is legalized, we will have twice or thrice the number of bettors now."

HUMAN rights advocates and relatives of martial law victims remember their martyred loved ones during the blessing and unveiling of a monument in Iloilo City. NESTOR P. BURG

Monument honors victims of martial law in Iloilo City

From page A1

tyrs from Panay Island were read amid strains of "Pag-ibig sa Tinubuang Lupa," a song usually played during protest rallies.

The eight-foot-tall and six-foot-wide landmark, made of concrete and granite tiles, stands near the center of historic Plaza Libertad.

Human rights groups—Panay Alliance-Karapatan, Mothers and Relatives against Tyranny (Martyr), Samahan ng mga Ex-Detainees Laban sa Detensyon at para sa Amnestiya (Selda), and the Ecumenical Movement for Justice and Peace—led a fund campaign that raised P80,000 for the project.

3 clenched fists

Three arms with clenched fists emerge from the structure. Architect Joemarie Moleta said the figures depicted the struggle of women, children and men to break free of oppression and repression.

A similar monument was erected in Roxas City in Capiz in December 2000.

Reminder of 'dark days'

Jaro Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, who led the rites, said the monument in Iloilo City was a reminder of the "dark days" after martial law was declared on Sept. 21, 1972.

He said the dictatorship was a chapter in the country's history that should be remembered, "not to fill ourselves with hatred ... but to fill ourselves with gratitude that we have been delivered from it."

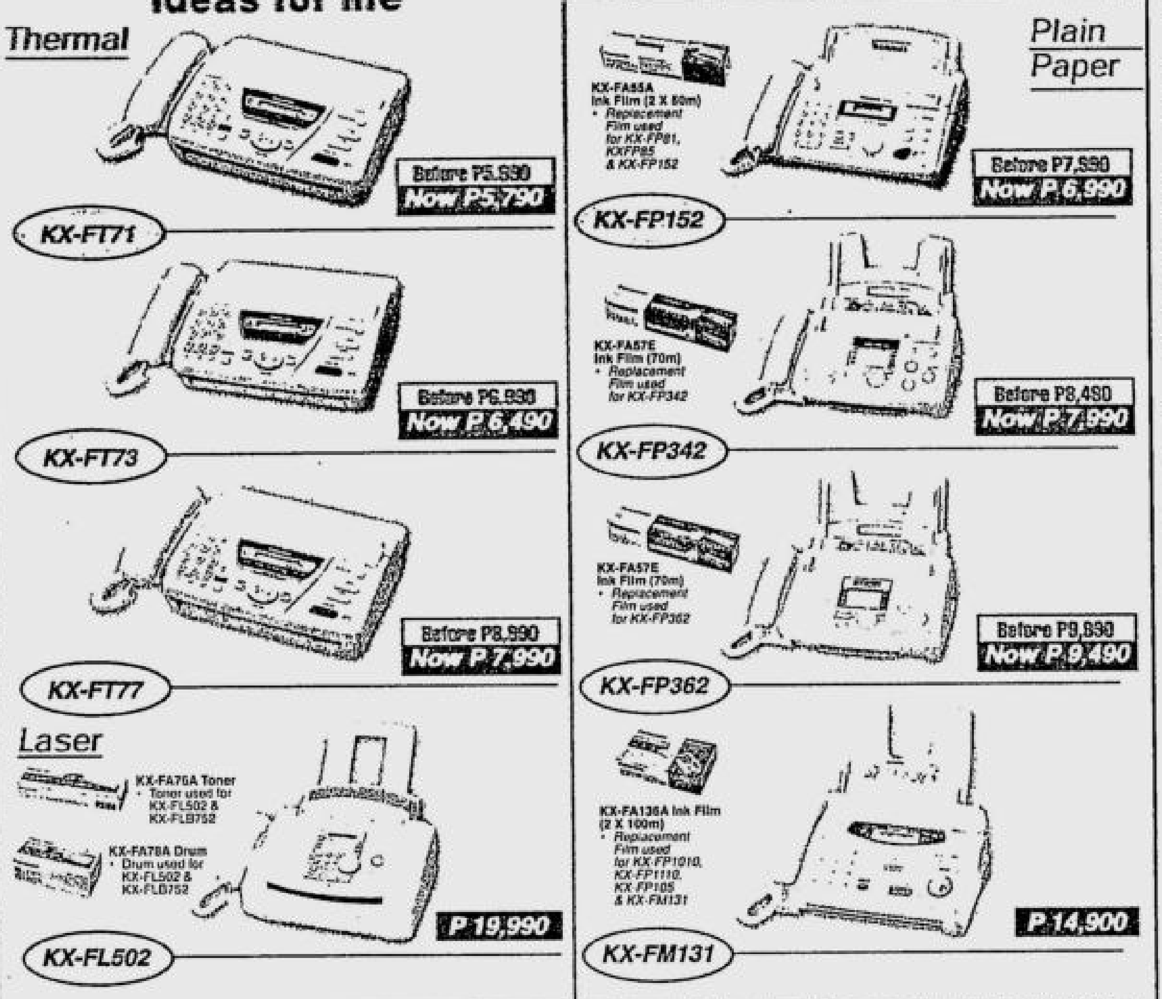
At the same time, he prayed "that the martyrs and *desaparecidos* (missing) of this regime may find justification, deliverance and salvation in the next life."

Jocelyn Manaay, the chair of Martyr, said the fallen patriots surely never expected such a monument to be erected, since they had sought no recognition.

"We salute them because despite the risk and amid their fears, they persevered," Manaay said. "We must not [consider] this monument [as] just a cold slab of stone. We must continue to live the ideals that they died for."

Samuel Torrato, secretary general of Panay Alliance-Karapatan, said that 18 years after the dictator's ouster, the victims' families were still in the dark.

On top of this, he said, "instruments of the dictatorship" remained. He cited the "no permit, no rally policy" that Marcos imposed under Batas Pambansa No. 882, warrantless arrests, and summary execution of activists and political dissenters.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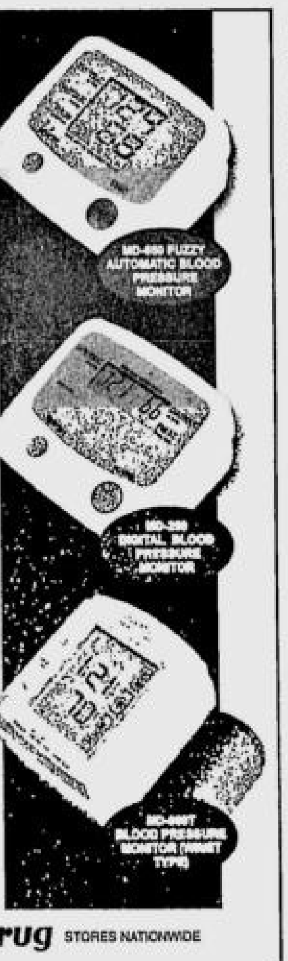
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Muslim congressmen to hold back-channel talks with MILF leaders

ZAMBOANGA CITY—An all-Muslim team from the House of Representatives has been constituted for back-channel talks with the leadership of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) ahead of peace talks with the government in Malaysia next month, Deputy Speaker for Mindanao Gerry Salapuddin said Friday.

Salapuddin told the INQUIRER the team, which was formed by Speaker Jose de Venecia, would "help the national government expedite the peace process."

"We will (speak with the MILF) as ambassadors. There might be certain issues they may want to confide to us that we can respond to," said Salapuddin, one of the leaders of the team, when asked if this was an official mission.

Salapuddin said that because the congressmen belonged to the legislative branch of government, they could not be considered as negotiators.

But he said there were three major issues the team hoped to tackle with the MILF leadership.

These were the MILF's demand for a United Nations-supervised referendum, similar to that conducted in East Timor, to determine the fate of the Bangsamoro people; the issue on ancestral domain, and the demobilization of MILF forces once a peace deal is signed.

Salapuddin said issues discussed during the back-channel talks would be tackled when the team reports to Congress.

He said the team's recommendations would be submitted to President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Anak Mindanao Rep. Mujiv Hataman, a member of the team, said their mission "is more on getting the real feeling and sentiments of the MILF."

He said that despite lack of time, the team was hopeful it could achieve something significant.

Salapuddin said Maguindanao Rep. Simeon Datumanong had started communicating with MILF chair Murad Ebrahim to finalize the terms of the meeting.

"We are just waiting for their go-signal," he said. *Julie S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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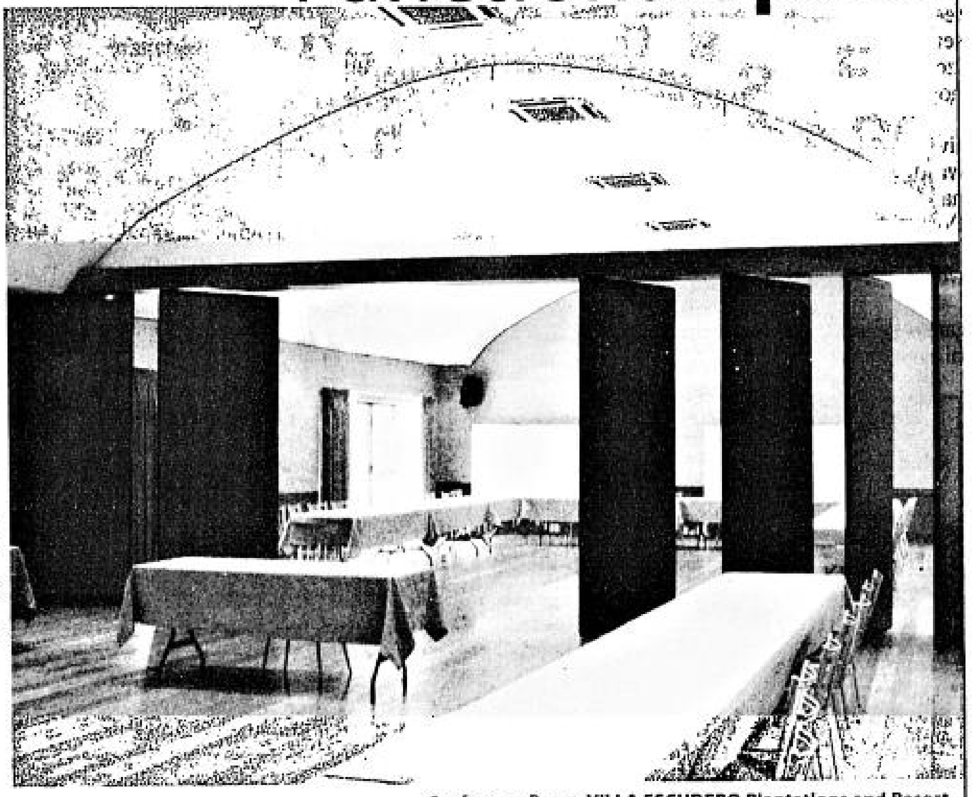

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Militant lawmakers decry cut in pork

From page A1

Casiño and Joel Virador of Bayan Muna, Crispin "Ka Bel" Beltran and Rafael "Ka Paeng" Mariano of Anakpawis, and Liza Maza of Gabriela have joined most of their colleagues in the party-list bloc in protesting the prospect of getting only P10 million each in pork barrel for the last six months of the year.

They said they must get their full share of P35 million each for the second half of 2004.

Each member of the House of Representatives is allotted P70 million in Priority Development Assistance Funds (PDAF), the official name of the pork barrel, every year and each senator, P200 million.

Pork barrel refers to the funds in the national budget for projects identified by members of Congress primarily for the purpose of ingratiating themselves with their constituents. It is a source of kickbacks and campaign funds for unscrupulous members.

The Catholic Church and other groups have urged lawmakers to give up their pork in the face of the fiscal crisis.

In a letter dated Sept. 9 to Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr., the party-list representatives protested the "uneven and grossly unfair allocation" of the PDAF.

"It is our collective conviction that each House member is equally distinguished and honorable," they wrote De Venecia.

The lawmakers signed the letter just days after their "politics of change" bloc declared that they were renouncing the pork barrel amid the public clamor for its abolition.

To help narrow the budget deficit next year, Malacañang cut by 40 percent the pork barrel allocation of legislators in the proposed budget for 2005.

For scrapping

An Aug. 30 statement by Bayan Muna read: "Ocampo ... categorically and confidently stated today that his group is for the scrapping of the current pork barrel system which is being exploited by selfish and partisan interests."

In his statement of Aug. 29, Ocampo declared: "Bayan Muna would confidently embrace a political setup without the pork barrel."

In contrast, the ideological rivals of Ocampo's group did not sign the "Dear Mr. Speaker" letter. They were Representatives Loretta Ann Rosales, Mario Aguja and Theresia Hontiveros-Baraquel of Akbayan and Rep. Renato Magtubo of Partido ng Manggagawa.

Akbayan and Partido ng Manggagawa are identified with camps that had bolted the mainstream leftist movement.

The other party-list lawmakers who signed the Sept. 9 letter to De Venecia were Guillermo Cua (Coop-Natco), Ernesto Gidaya (Veterans Federation Party), Sunny Rose Madamba (Association of Philippine Electric Cooperatives), Eulogio Magsaysay (Alliance of Volunteer Educators) and Rodante Marcoleta (Alagad).

Ernesto Pablo (Apec), Florencio Noel (An Waray), Hans Christian Señeres (Buhay), Acmad Tomawis (Ang Laban ng Indiginong Filipino), Rene Velarde (Buhay) and Joel Villanueva (Citizen's Battle Against Corruption) also signed.

Unfair allocation

Among those who did not sign the letter were Representatives Benjamin Cruz (Buhay), Mujiv Hataman (Anak Mindanao) and Edgar Valdez (Apec).

"This is to formally convey our collective concern and resentment over the uneven and grossly unfair allocation of the PDAF to some—if not most—of our colleagues in the party-list (bloc)," the signatories said.

Citing information from Rep. Rolando Andaya Jr. (LP, Camarines Sur), the signatories said some of them "may end up with only P10 million each for the last six months of fiscal year 2004 with the P25 million balance to be settled later."

Because the 13th Congress opened in July, each House member is entitled to P35 million, not the full P70 million.

The party-list lawmakers said Andaya, who chairs the House appropriations committee, told them that there were only 19 party-list lawmakers in 2003 as opposed to 24 who were elected this year.

There are also three new House members representing newly created legislative districts.

"He (Andaya) holds the view that because the 2004 budget was a reenacted one, he allegedly finds it extremely difficult to cover, budget-wise, a bigger number not previously anticipated," the party-list lawmakers said.

They argued that it was their "well-considered position that the 19 party-list representatives, who were members of the 12th Congress, had no vested or inchoate right over the fiscal year 2004 budget."

23 new members

They asserted that "no one can anticipate with certainty the outcome of the party-list elections of 2004."

"Second, in 2003, and notwithstanding the fact that seven party-list representatives came in only in July of said year ... each one was allotted P70 million of PDAF," the legislators said.

They also pointed out that the staffing summary of the national budget proposal for fiscal year 2005 "shows that a total of 259 members of the House of Representatives were earmarked for the fiscal years 2003, 2004 and 2005."

"This means that the 2003-2005 budget approximated at least 50 party-list representatives. There are only 24 party-list representatives this year, and a total of 236 House members—or an aggregate balance of 23 more House members."

They noted that the Party-List System Act or Republic Act No. 7941 "provides that party-list representatives shall be entitled to the same salaries and emoluments as regular members of the House of Representatives."

Magtubo said someone asked him to sign the letter but he declined. "The Partido ng Manggagawa is consistent with its stand that the pork barrel should be abolished, especially in this time of fiscal crisis," he said.

"In the first place, legislators are first and foremost lawmakers. We make laws. We are not project managers," Magtubo said.

In a separate interview, Akbayan's Rosales said her colleague, Aguja, had previously signed the petition but withdrew it later.

"Akbayan is for the abolition of pork. We are just being consistent," Rosales said.

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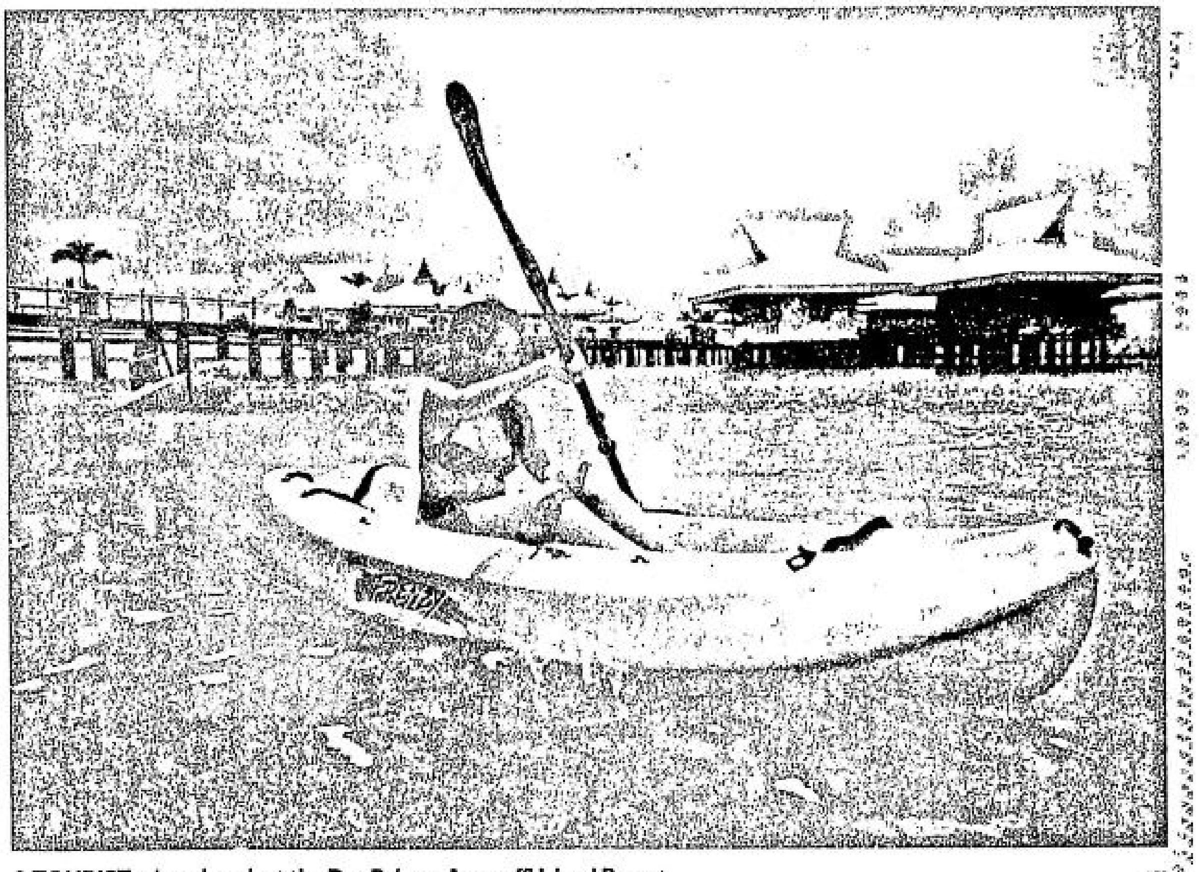


A TOURIST tries a kayak at the Dos Palmas Arreceffi Island Resort. AFP

Koreans revive resort laid low by terror

From page A1

AN ITALIAN cameraman examines a starfish during a trip to a small islet off the Dos Palmas resort. AFP

deter the South Koreans.

"Before the Abu Sayyaf attack, Dos Palmas never marketed itself abroad," says Leeds Trompeta, the resort's marketing manager.

"We found the foreign market, especially the South Koreans, were less susceptible to those (terrorism) concerns."

Repackaged

When the resort reopened in March 2002, it was repackaged for the Asian market.

More than 1,500 South Koreans checked in last year, and their numbers topped 1,300 in the first seven months of 2004, making up as much as 70 percent of its patrons.

The Koreans know little about the May 2001 kidnapping. But they don't seem to be bothered by it either.

Schoolteacher Soo Jin-song, 26, who was thrilled by the scuba-diving, fishing and sojourns to surrounding small islets, says: "It's no problem to me. It happens everywhere."

"I have been to Bintang, Indonesia, but Dos Palmas is better," she says.

"Korea is also dangerous," comments vacationing housewife Jung Yoon-hee, 40. After all, hostile North Korea lies just across the border back home, she notes.

Trompeta says the resort now has the same occupancy levels as before the Abu Sayyaf raid.

Lotte Tours, a South Korean travel agency, began offering a charter package out of Seoul in June via the national flag carrier, Philippine Airlines. The flights land in Puerto Princesa, a 50-minute boat ride away from Dos Palmas.

A $1,100-package buys a tourist three days of fun in the tropical resort.

The charter flights boosted Dos Palmas occupancy rate to 90 percent in the normally lean months of July and August, Trompeta says. Charter flights resume in January.

He said gross profits should rise 42.8 percent from 2003 to about P100 million this year.

Attraction

The Asian tourists are attracted by Dos Palmas' atmosphere of an exclusive beach resort seemingly located in the middle of the ocean although it is competitively priced and quite accessible, Trompeta says.

A guest on average spends $250 for a three-day stay on the 24-hectare island.

The resort has its own power plant, waste treatment facility and desalination plant. Security has been discreetly beefed up to avoid a repeat of the kidnappings.

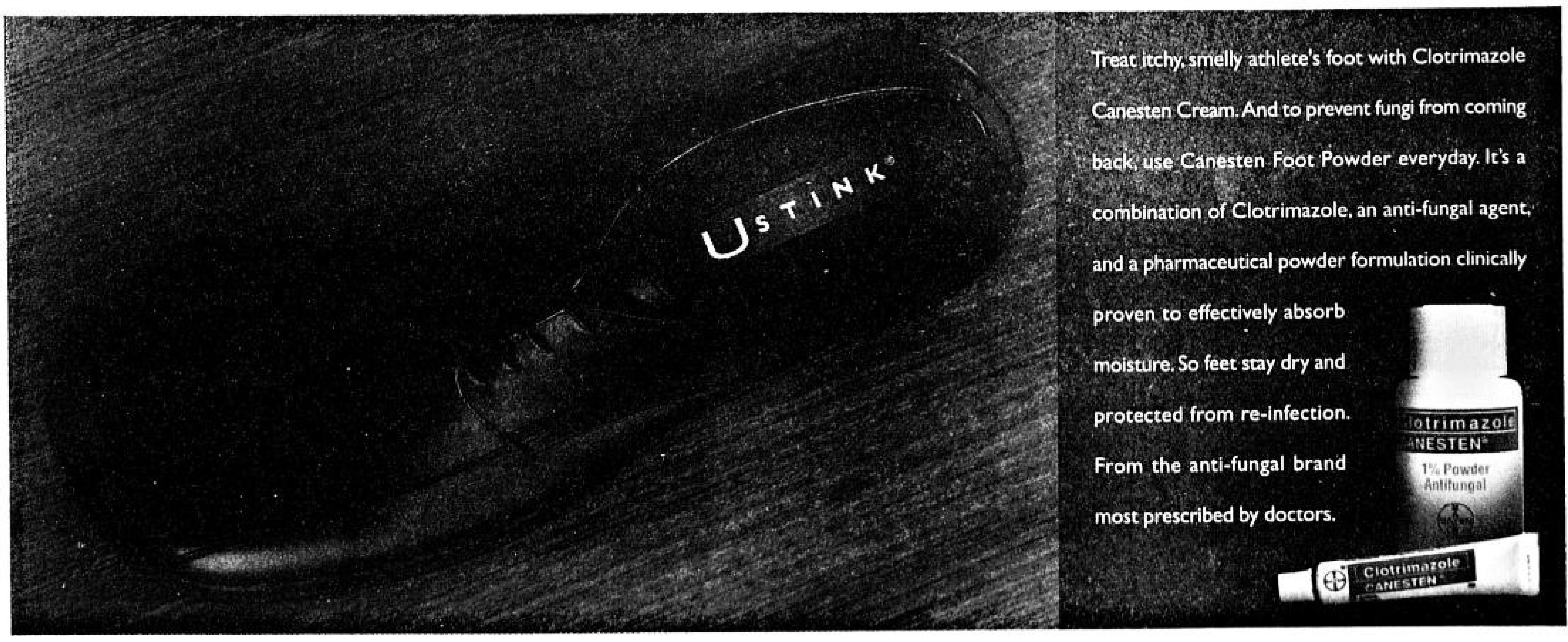
Watchtowers and a multimillion-dollar radar system check for any unauthorized boats in the area.

A cadre of Marines has been posted at Arreceffi to train the security guards and other resort personnel.

"If trouble breaks out, we will back these guys up," a Dos Palmas waiter told AFP, pointing to the M-16-toting guards while he cradled a government-issued Garand rifle on his lap.

Trompeta says Filipinos are returning to Dos Palmas as well.

"You can see the perception change. People have put it behind them and are giving us another chance." *AFP*



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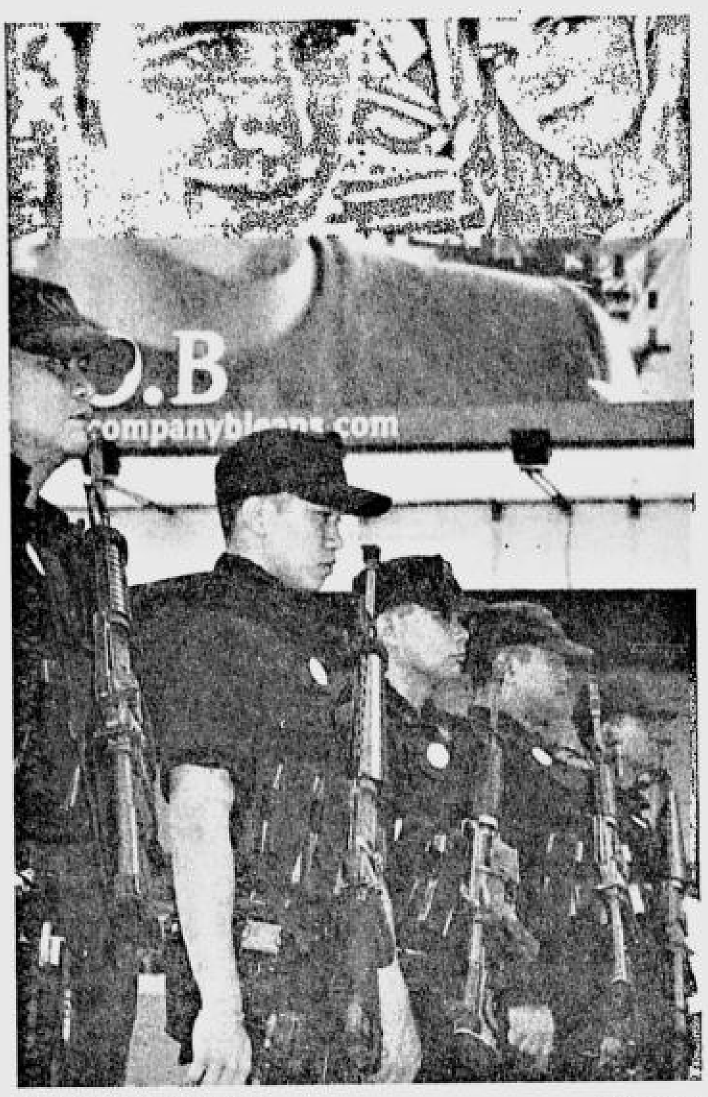
Fire hits cooking oil warehouse



POLICE VISIBILITY RUDY ESPERAS
Members of the Eastern Police District Special Weapons and Tactics team display their high-powered firearms before being deployed around the Mandaluyong commercial center Sunday.

By Edson Tandoc Jr.

A TWO-HOUR fire hit a warehouse of used cooking oil in Valenzuela City early yesterday. No one was hurt but about P5 million in property was lost.

The fire broke out about 2:30 a.m. at the back of the God and I Merchandise warehouse in Barangay Ugong, where drums of used cooking oil were stored.

The firm supplies used cooking oil to pig feed makers, city fire chief Efren Yadao told the INQUIRER.

Fire quickly spread because the one-story warehouse was partly made of wood, Yadao said.

Firefighters had a hard time getting near the burning warehouse because Bernardino Street—the only street leading to the warehouse—was too narrow for most of the fire trucks.

Numerous shanties at the back of the warehouse made things more difficult.

The warehouse was razed and the cause of the blaze was yet unknown.

US declares RP ports, maritime facilities secure

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE UNITED States has cleared Philippine ports and maritime facilities in terms of security and adequate safeguards against terrorism, according to the transportation department.

Transport Undersecretary Cecilio Penilla said the US Coast Guard, in a Sept. 9 advisory, did not include the Philippines in the list of 17 countries not in full compliance with the new international port security requirements.

The International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code prescribed by the United Nations carry provisions against anti-terrorism and port security, following the September 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States.

Without an ISPS clearance, Philippine vessels may not be allowed to dock at a foreign port the same way that foreign vessels could opt not to dock on local ports that have not complied with the new global standards.

Penilla, head of the country's Office for Transportation Security, said that not being included in the US Coast Guard list meant that there were adequate antiterrorism measures in place in the Philippines' port and maritime facilities.

The ISPS Code was adopted by the International Maritime Organization to ensure the safety and security of all ships and ports all over the world.

The Code, to be strictly enforced effective July 1, sets the standards by which ships and ports will be allowed to transport and handle goods traded by sea.

Philippine shipments to the United States, for example, run the risk of being refused entry if, neither the ship nor any of its last ten ports of call is not ISPS-compliant.

The transport official said the positive development should allay the fears of exporters and importers, businessmen engaged in international maritime trade, and the country's maritime sector.

"We should always be on our toes and ensure that port security measures under the ISPS Code are effectively and responsibly implemented," he stressed.

He said ISPS Code compliant ports must consistently follow the international security requirements, set a higher benchmark for security, and execute a declaration of security that details specific arrangement between vessels and port facilities.

The ISPS Code amends the 30-year-old Safety of Life at Sea Convention or SOLAS.

Stray bullet kills boy rescuing pet rabbit

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

IT WAS all too sudden and unexpected.

Cris Diey Parohinog, 11, was only trying to rescue his pet rabbit when a gun hidden under a TV rack went off and killed him.

It was gathered that Parohinog was playing with a rabbit that was given to him as a gift by an uncle who bought the animal in Baguio.

At about 10:30 p.m., the rabbit reportedly crawled and got stuck under their TV rack in the living room of their home in Kaunlaran Village, Navotas.

According to the police, Parohinog was trying to rescue the rabbit when he accidentally knocked off a .38-caliber revolver from its secret hiding place under the TV rack.

The gun fell and went off as it hit the floor. A bullet whizzed out of the gun's muzzle and hit the boy in the belly, police said.

However, Allen, 32, a cousin of Parohinog, told the INQUIRER a somewhat different story.

Allen said that when the rabbit got stuck under the TV rack, the boy got an umbrella and began poking under the furniture in an effort to free his pet.

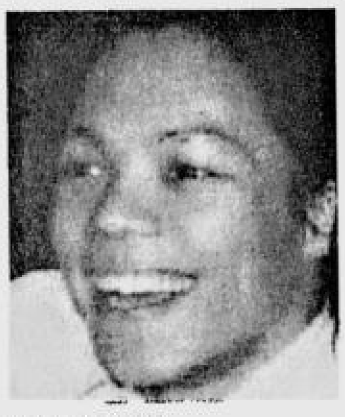
Suddenly, Allen added, as Parohinog was probing under the TV rack, a gunshot rang out.

None of his parents or immediate family members could be reached to confirm any of the stories.

Police said Parohinog, who was the youngest of eight children, was rushed by one of his brothers to the Pagamutang Bayan ng Malabon.

He was later transferred to the Tondo General Hospital where he died while undergoing treatment, police said.

MISSING



JAY MENDOZA

JACINTO Rivera Mendoza, also known as Jay Mendoza, 21, left home on Sept. 12 at 8:30 a.m. to attend Mass at the Presentation of Child Jesus Parish, BF Homes, Parañaque City.

He was wearing a gray short-sleeved shirt, jeans and black leather shoes.

Mendoza is 5'6" tall, fair skinned and has a good build.

Anyone who has information on his whereabouts may contact: 0919-8358751, 0917-8241683, (632)439-7665 and (632)628-1367.

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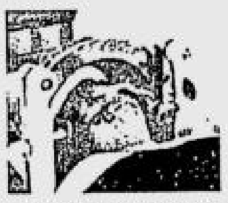
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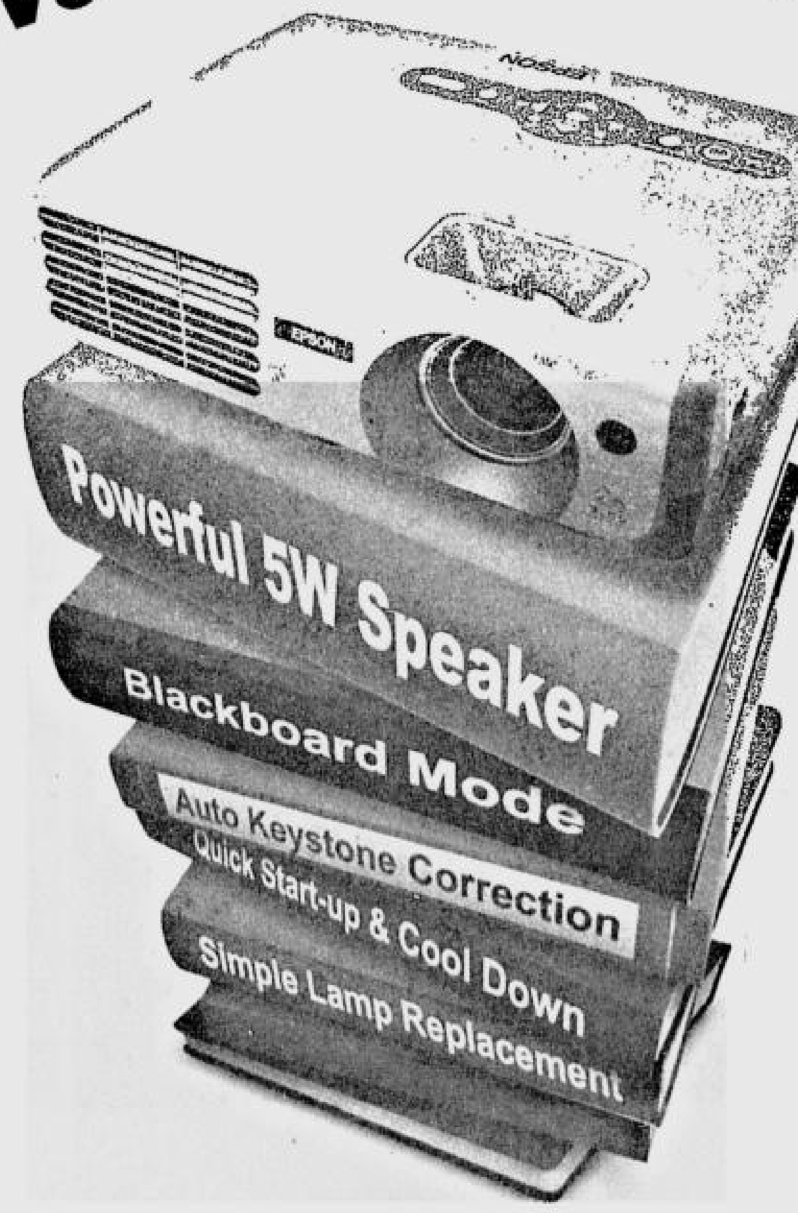

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Cops reminded: Patrol cars for official use only

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

IT IS the way things are supposed to be, but then policemen have to be reminded just the same: Police cars are for official use only.

In a memorandum, National Capital Region Police Office Director Avelino Razon Jr. warned his men never to use police vehicles for unauthorized or personal use.

The directive was in support to the Land Transportation Office campaign against the improper use of government vehicles.

He told the INQUIRER yesterday he already directed the district directors and station commanders in the metropolis to monitor users of patrol cars and other police vehicles.

Policemen found violating this directive shall face sanctions, he added.

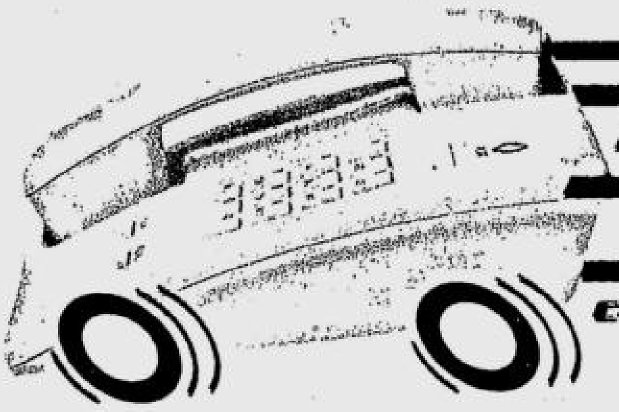
In the same memorandum, Razon specifically warned his men against using police vehicles in going to "off-limits areas" like cockpit arenas, night spots and girlie bars.

He encouraged the public to report to the police if they know of any lawman using police vehicles for personal purposes.

Earlier, Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza warned government employees and officials against unauthorized use of government vehicles.

There had been numerous criticisms of government officials and their families using "for official use only" vehicles in going to malls, restaurants or even to school.

Mendoza urged the police not to be reluctant in apprehending erring drivers of red plate vehicles.



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NCRPO rolls police stations onto the streets

By Margaux C. Ortiz

PEOPLE usually catch a bus, but these buses are designed to catch people, criminals in particular.

Beginning today, the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) will be deploying mobile police stations in Metro Manila.

These buses are meant to enhance police visibility and security in the metropolis, especially with the advent of the Christmas season, NCRPO chief Director Avelino Razon Jr. said.

Razon said the ordinary buses provided by Philippine National Police Chief Director General Edgar Aglipay were transformed into police stations on wheels, equipped with temporary detention cells.

The detention cells could accommodate about 30 to 40 persons, the NCRPO chief said.

Razon added that the buses would be manned by policemen who would patrol, apprehend, conduct investigations, and even do civic and community services.

"The assigned investigators were instructed to do almost all sorts of public services, depending on the need or situation," Razon said.

NCRPO spokesperson Chief Insp. Gerry Agunod said three mobile police stations and two rescue vans would initially be deployed.

The NCRPO would add two more of the special buses soon to be evenly distributed in Metro Manila's five police districts, he added.

Cop watchdog in Manila forms own ethics body

By Tarra V. Quismundo

WHILE busy handling complaints against erring lawmen, it still has to look at itself to see how it is doing.

Realizing such a need, the People's Law Enforcement Board (PLEB) of Manila has begun setting up an ethics committee to handle complaints against its officers.

"It would look at allegations against PLEB members," said PLEB Manila Executive Director Francesca Custodio-Manzano, who called the committee a self-policing body within the PLEB.

The PLEB is a quasi-judicial body that handles administrative complaints against policemen who may have committed abuses in Manila.

Manzano, a lawyer, said the PLEB secretariat had received complaints from both defendants and complainants in PLEB cases alleging that some board members had decided their cases unfairly.

PLEB Manila has a board for each of Manila's six districts, with four members and one chair hearing and deciding cases against lawmen.

The board, composed of barangay chairmen, members of the City Council, and lawyers, could suspend a policeman or dismiss him from the service.

The ethics committee will watch over board members

Manzano said it might be composed of PLEB overall chair Teresita Ang-See, Mayor Lito Atienza or his representative, and possibly a Manila councilor.

The ethics committee, set to first meet on October, would also take up problems in performance of board members, including their attendance in PLEB hearings.

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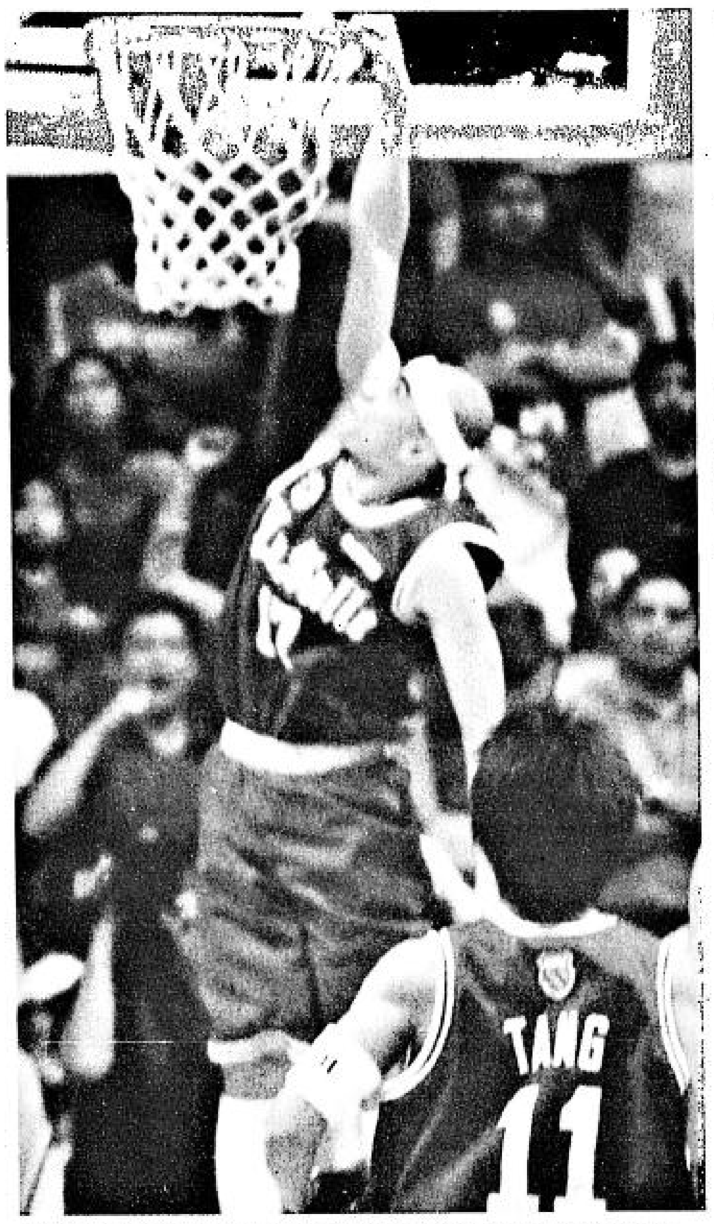
Vengeful Archers rip Eagles, reach Finals



GREEN GIANT: Mac Cardona puts an exclamation point to La Salle's rout of Ateneo with a dunk and then embraces injured King Eagle Larry Fonacier (right) after the highly emotional game. PHOTOS BY ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

By Jasmine W. Payo

IF THERE'S one thing that will surely rev up the La Salle Archers in the UAAP basketball Finals, it's the fact they've just sent their arch rivals packing.

And Mac Cardona made sure it's a heartbreaking sendoff as he unabashedly hoisted shots from all over for a game-high 24 points as the Archers eliminated the Ateneo Eagles, 69-55, in their semifinal showdown yesterday at the jampacked Araneta Coliseum.

The Archers, who booked their 10th Finals appearance in 11 years, will battle the Far Eastern Tamaraws in a best-of-three championship series starting this Thursday also at the Big Dome.

"We're back again in the Finals. One thing that is also important is we erased the stigma of 2002 and 2003," said coach Franz Pumaren, whose Archers lost to Ateneo in the 2002 championship series, and were later denied a Finals appearance by the Eagles in 2003.

"A lot of critics were doubting us, especially when we went 4-4 (win-loss record) and some even said that we won't make it to the Finals. But we're really in good shape and we proved that we belong this year. Hopefully, we can sustain this run," said Pumaren after their eighth straight win, the longest streak this season.

Cardona powered a 9-2 run early in the second half that gave La Salle a 39-30 lead even as Ateneo lost its offensive touch to finish with its second-lowest score this year. The Eagles lowest output was a 51-point production against the National University.

Jerwin Gaco continued La Salle's charge and a JV Casio triple improved the lead to 14, 49-35, by

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T'chargers, Aces down separate Korean rivals

By June Navarro

KALANI Ferreria and Ronald Tubid spewed fire when Shell needed them most and the Turbochargers repulsed the SK Telecom Knights, 99-87, Saturday night in the PBA-Korea Basketball League goodwill series at the San Juan Gym.

Ferreria fired 10 of his game-high 23 points while Tubid was unstoppable in the final quarter as the Turbochargers stormed back from 15 points down to finish pulling away.

Shell racked up 30 points in the fourth period while putting the cuffs on the Knights' snipers, who were limited to only 11 points.

Excellent defense also keyed Alaska's 90-85 triumph over the SBS Stars in the curtain-raiser, with the Aces holding their opponents scoreless in the final two minutes.

After Hong Sa Beung and Eun Hee Seuk drilled in back-to-back triples to give the Koreans an 85-83 edge, the Aces came up with a smothering defense.

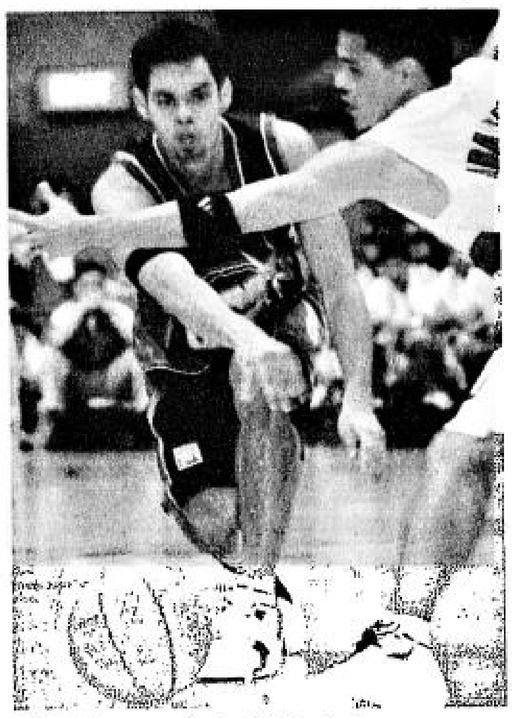
Mike Cortez and Ali Peek scored 18 points each for the Aces, who overcame the last-quarter heroics of SBS imports Kendall Dartez and Joe Bunn. A former Red Bull import, Bunn topscored with 26 points and Dartez had 21.

The Knights absorbed their third straight setback against a PBA ballclub while the Stars took their first loss after defaulting their game against FedEx the other night.

Leonard White, the former Purefoods import playing for the Knights, saw limited action due to a bum stomach. After scoring an average of 32.5 points against Sta. Lucia Realty and Coca-Cola, White was held to nine markers this time.

Korean national team mainstays Chun Hee Chul and Cho Sang Hyun paced the Knights with 23 and 18 points, respectively.

Chun and Cho played for the Korean quintet that eliminated the RP squad made up of PBA stars in the semifinals of the 2002 Busan Asiad.


TUBID issues a pass in this file photo.

The scores:

SHELL 99-Ferreria 23, Tubid 21, Mamarl 12, Dela Cruz 12, Legaspi 10, Alvarez 9, Sta. Maria 5, Jackson 4, Bajar 0, Cruz 0.

KNIGHTS 87-Chun 23, Cho 18, Hwang 16, Lang 13, White 9, Park 3, Chun 0, Kim 0, Lee 0.

Quarters: 29-24, 49-54, 69-76, 99-87

ALASKA 90-Cortez 18, Peek 18, Arigo 15, Allado 9, Franco 8, Tejada 7, Cablay 6, Duat 4, Padilla 3, Thoss 2.

STARS 85-Bunn 26, Dartel 21, Eun 11, Kim 10, Yoon 7, Hong 6, Eun 4, Kim 0, Park 0, Yoon 0.

Quarters: 12-11, 32-all, 62-57, 90-85

POC presidency could be won with duds

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

IT had the makings of a mismatch, but Oscar De La Hoya also disappointed a lot of fans the way he fell and surrendered in Las Vegas yesterday.

De La Hoya, the awful underdog, could have preserved what was left of his legend if he had survived Bernard Hopkins.

It was, indeed, a tragic ending as De La Hoya, one of the most popular ring gladiators today, fell flat on his face in a fight he had hoped would define his career.

Here at home, the fight for the presidency of the Philippine Olympic Committee likewise appears to be shaping fast into a mismatch.

The election for the POC top post, to be contested by reigning POC chief Celso Dayrit and Peping Cojuangco, a grizzled politician, has been slated for November.

But a random check among various sports sectors bared that, barring unforeseen circumstances, Cojuangco would outvote Dayrit.

***

In fact, there were suggestions the sports body need not resort to a vote as Cojuangco could be declared POC chief by acclamation.

This perceived overall edge being enjoyed by Cojuangco, of course, has been hugely boosted by the candid plug made by First Gentleman Mike Arroyo.

Mr. Arroyo made what was readily perceived as an outright endorsement when he declared that a politician of Cojuangco's power and caliber could help unite the country's fractious sports hierarchy.

The statement was made last week during the induction of officers of the Philippine Amateur Track and Field Association (Patafa), whose head, Go Teng Kok, has been openly batting for a Cojuangco takeover at the POC.

That, leaving Philippine sports totally in the hands of a politician, could indeed be a hysterical solution.

It's very easy to assume that politics is the single biggest obstacle to sports development in the country.

***

Well, truth is they had tried various solutions to no avail.

So, although it was akin to stating that politics is the necessary evil that could save Philippine sports, there were those who readily applauded the First Gentleman's stand.

Whether it was hysterical or absurd, the Arroyo solution was deemed urgent in these times of great need and uncertainty. Cojuangco had every reason to bask in the Arroyo assurance.

But an odd, if not totally irritating, sequel to the Arroyo endorsement was Cojuangco playing openly the role of political kingpin.

He did not only belittle the problems besetting RP sports.

In a one-on-one with the INQUIRER's Marc Anthony Reyes, Cojuangco said these problems paled in comparison to what he's been through in politics.

***

Now, listen. To give us a sample of how he would save RP sports, Cojuangco, for starters, said he would sell the historic Rizal Memorial Sports Complex and then establish a national training center in Clark Field, Pampanga.

Those, indeed, are grand, laudable plans.

And we could only ask why others before Cojuangco had not thought of this noble ploy.

Oops. Hold it, please. Before we could openly applaud, we got this warning for Cojuangco not to be totally deluded.

A knowledgeable informant has just tipped us that Cojuangco, unlike boxing great Bernard Hopkins, might end up winning by firing duds.

Why? It was bared that, much as Cojuangco or even President Gloria Arroyo would like to sell the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex, the proposed deal could not prosper.

Reason: the historic complex belongs to the City of Manila.

This information was given by a trusted personnel at the RMSC who said records show the land area occupied by the complex had been leased to the old Philippine Amateur Athletic Federation (PAAF) by the City of Manila.

If we remember right, there had been a court litigation on this matter some years ago.

Well, cozy as Cojuangco's initial solution to sporting ills had appeared, it may help if he first consulted with his lawyers.

He could indeed sell the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex, but Cojuangco would have to buy it first. That, you bet, could be twice as complicated as saving a henchman caught in a wholesale gun-smuggle try at the airport.

Village Hoops at aSK slated

PREPARATIONS are under way for the staging next month of the Village Hoops, a by-invitation basketball tournament organized by the adidas Sport Kamp (aSK) in cooperation with Volvo and Carrier.

aSK, a 5,000-square-meter athletic center located in the heart of Global City in Taguig, prides itself with a state-of-the-art indoor basketball court, venue of the six-week-long event, according to Kamp chair Arsenic Laurel.

"The court is complete with modern equipment such as a maple wood flooring, tempered glass backstop and torque flex ring, all of which are staple accessories in the National Basketball Association," Laurel said.

He added that aSK also has facilities for other sports like volleyball, baseball, softball, tetherball, wall climbing, soccer, kickball, aerobics, touch football, and martial arts which are all open to the public.

Teams from Magallanes, Bel-Air, San Lorenzo, Merville, Alabang and Dasmariñas have confirmed their participation.

The Village Hoops, also backed by GNC, Oxydo Eyewear, and Royal Caribbean Jamaican Patties, will have former PBA player Fritz Gaston as commissioner.

For inquiries, call 816-0951 or 816-0433 or log on to www.sportskamp.com.

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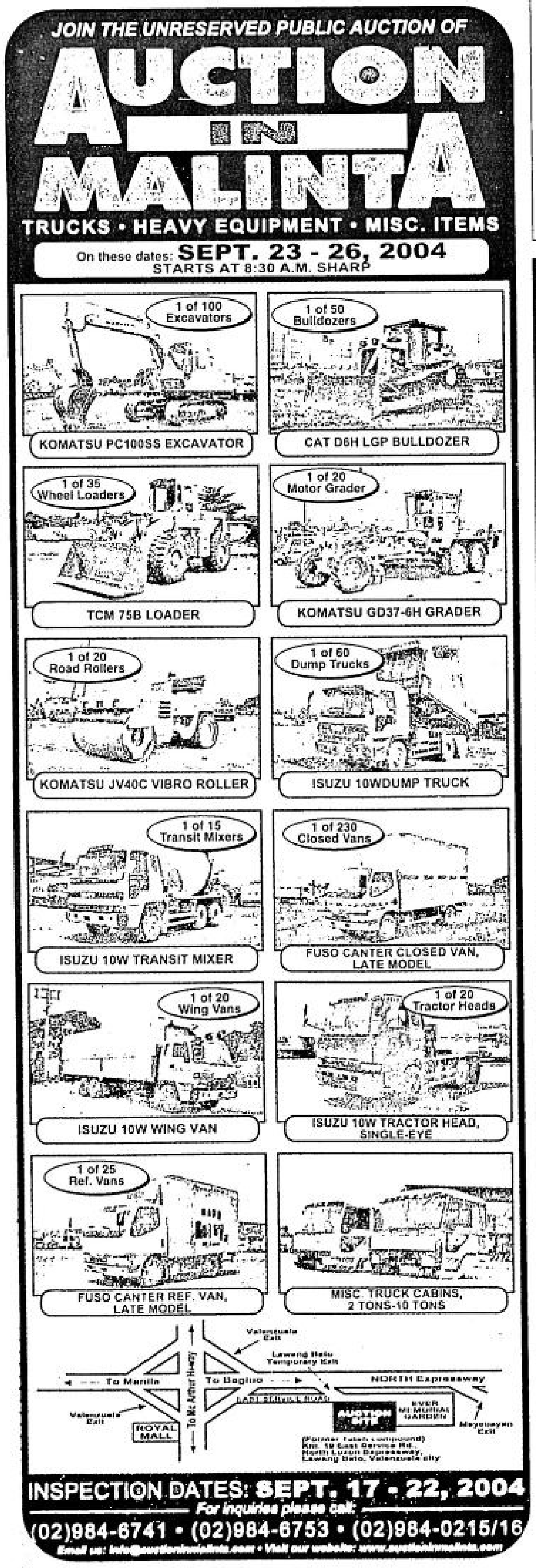
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Rosales, Delasin crumble with 77s

1 shot off the lead overnight, Jenny struggles in wet weather to be 7 adrift

JENNY Rosales failed to capitalize on an early morning tee-off as she soared to a five-over-par 77 in the second round Saturday (Sunday in Manila) and virtually surrendered her bid for the crown in the Safeway Classic at the Columbia Edgewater Country Club in Portland, Oregon.

ROSALES: Four front-nine bogeys AFP

In a complete turnaround from her brilliant first-round form Friday where she fired a five-under 67 on her 26th birthday, Rosales went birdieless and stumbled with five bogeys, four of them in the front nine.

From a tie for second place, just a stroke off the leader, Rosales plummeted to a share of 22nd place at 144, seven strokes off new leaders Lorie Kane and Candie Kung who shot a 69 and 68, respectively, to tie for top spot at 137.

Annika Sorenstam made her move with a 69 to join Janice Moodie (72) and Carin Koch (67) in third place at 139.

Filipina-American Dorothy Delasin, in fifth spot after Round 1, also posted a 77 and fell to 39th at 135.

Grace Park (69) and Christina Kim (71) were in a group at 4 under after enduring wind gusts to 38 kph and occasional downpours.

"It's just a test of survival," Kane said. "You don't think of par, you just try to hit solid shots."

First-round play was suspended for more than an hour because of a thunderstorm and another squall stopped play as darkness fell. Thirty-one players had to complete their opening rounds Saturday morning.

Kane had an early second-round tee time, but was still pelted by rain and wind.

"There will be some people that this weather bothers, but I'm not going to let it bother me," the Canadian said. "Simple as that."

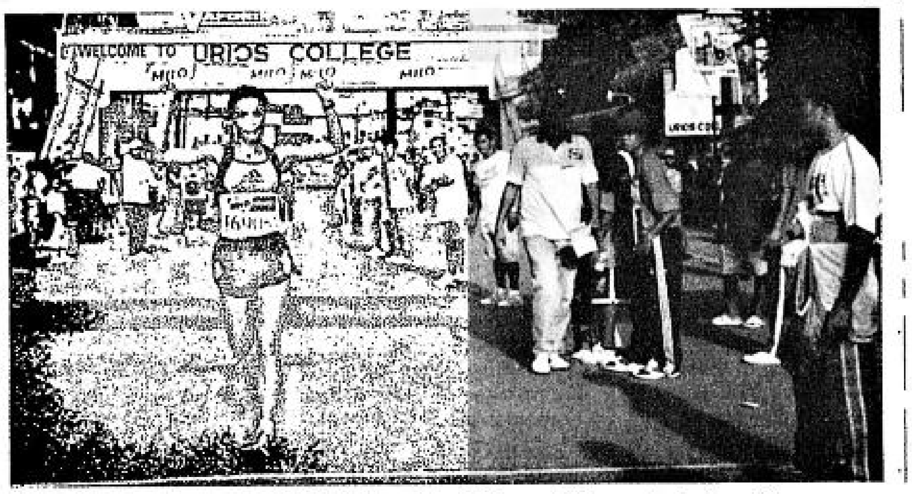
It turned out Rosales and Delasin were not the worst victims of the unforgiving playing conditions.

Tour rookie Brandi Jackson, the leader after the first round with a 66, crumbled with an 82 to miss the cut.

Kane has not won a tournament since 2001, when she held off Sorenstam in the LPGA Takefuji Classic.

Kung is still seeking her first tour victory of the year after winning three times last season.

Sorenstam, who won last week after taking the month off, started the day at 2 under, then quietly crept up the leaderboard, reaching 5 under until a bogey on the par-4 15th knocked her back. *AFP; With a report from Jong Arcano*



HAZEL Madamba crosses the finish line of the Milo qualifying run in Butuan City.

Azarcon, Madamba rule Caraga Milo race elims

BUTUAN CITY—Genovevo Azarcon Jr. proved too fast for the defending champion while veteran Hazel Madamba was unchallenged in topping the Caraga region elimination race of the 28th National Milo Marathon yesterday at the town plaza here.

Azarcon clocked one hour, eight minutes and 22 seconds to rule the men's 21-km qualifying race. Last year's top placer, Jonard Comonong, came in second at 1:09:52 while Rafael Tejeda placed third at 1:10:00.

For the second straight year, the man with the fastest time here was disqualified from the race. Arnold Umabi was declared an illegal runner because he already ran and won in the elimination race in Cagayan de Oro City.

Madamba, a fixture in the Milo Marathon, timed 1:20:13. The 1999 National Finals runner-up said she was not pressured at all due to the lack of worthy opposition.

Madamba, an enlisted member of the Philippine Navy stationed in Luzon, ruled the Olongapo City leg last year.

Rose Arman (1:31:44) and last year's winner, Mary Jane Cahig (1:41:02), placed second and third, respectively.

The top three finishers in the race held in partnership with Cebu Pacific, Globe Handyphone, Bayview Park Hotel, adidas and the Department of Tourism will represent the region in the 42-K National Finals slated on Nov. 14 in Metro Manila.

The top three finishers, in the 5-K fun run were Branex Arado (17:07), JR Mahinay (17:08) and Rissan Serina (17:26) in the men's division, and Jovelyn Anobling (22:04), Jennie Sarido (23:30) and Cheche Eltagonde (23:51) in the distaff side.

More than 3,000 runners answered the starting gun fired by Mayor Democrito Plaza.

Antoque protégé tops Beam Tarlac 5K

MAMERTO Corpus didn't fail his mentor, Rey Antoque, as he overtook Reynaldo de Los Reyes in the final 1.5 kilometers to win the men's title of the Beam Zest-O Patakbong Pinoy yesterday in Tarlac City.

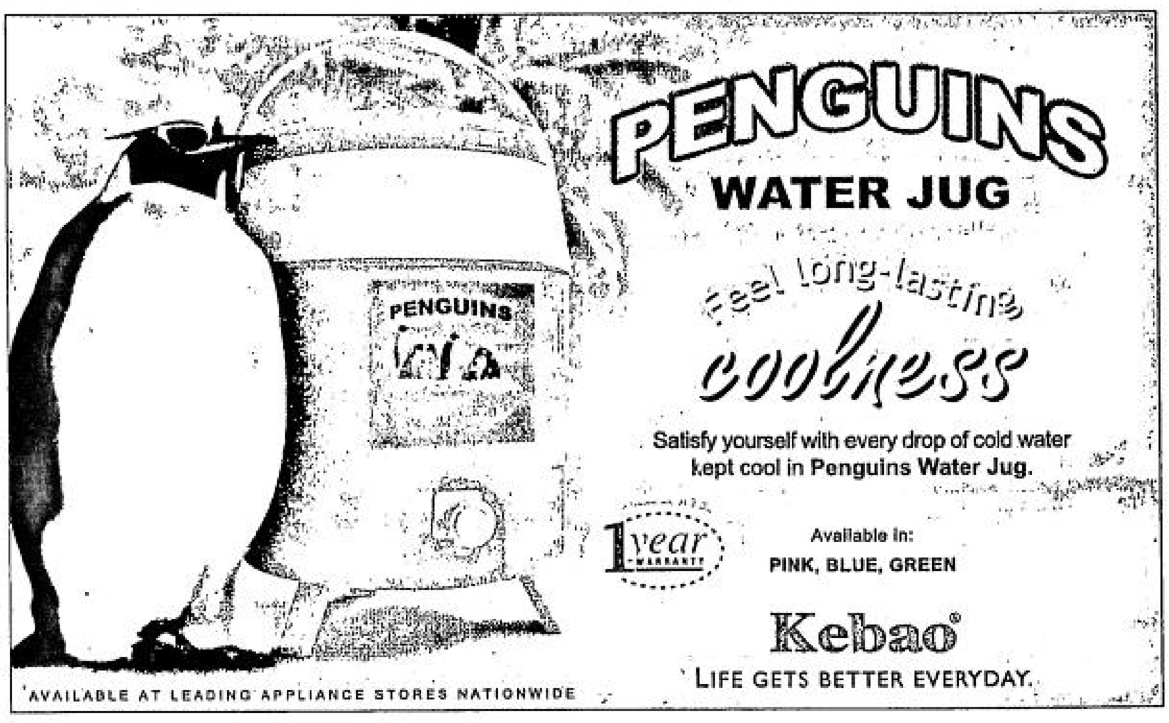
Liza Yambao posted her second straight victory in three weeks by handily topping the women's 5-K run.

Corpus, an Armyman like the veteran Antoque, timed 17 minutes and 30 seconds to beat De Los Reyes (18:03) in the race organized by Media Runners and Sports Promotions and sponsored by Beam Toothpaste and Zest-O Juice Drinks.

Rogelio Reli of Sampaloc placed third with a time of 18:16.

Yambao, who won the event's Manila leg recently, towed University of Santo Tomas teammate Bernardita Mag-aso as they timed 21:31 and 22:03, respectively. Third was Elena Torcelino (24:15).

Completing the men's top five were Isagani Tacu-Tacu (19:39) and Joseph Roseve (20:01). Adjenny de los Santos (25:44) and Helen Castillo (24:09) rounded out the first five finishers in the distaff race.



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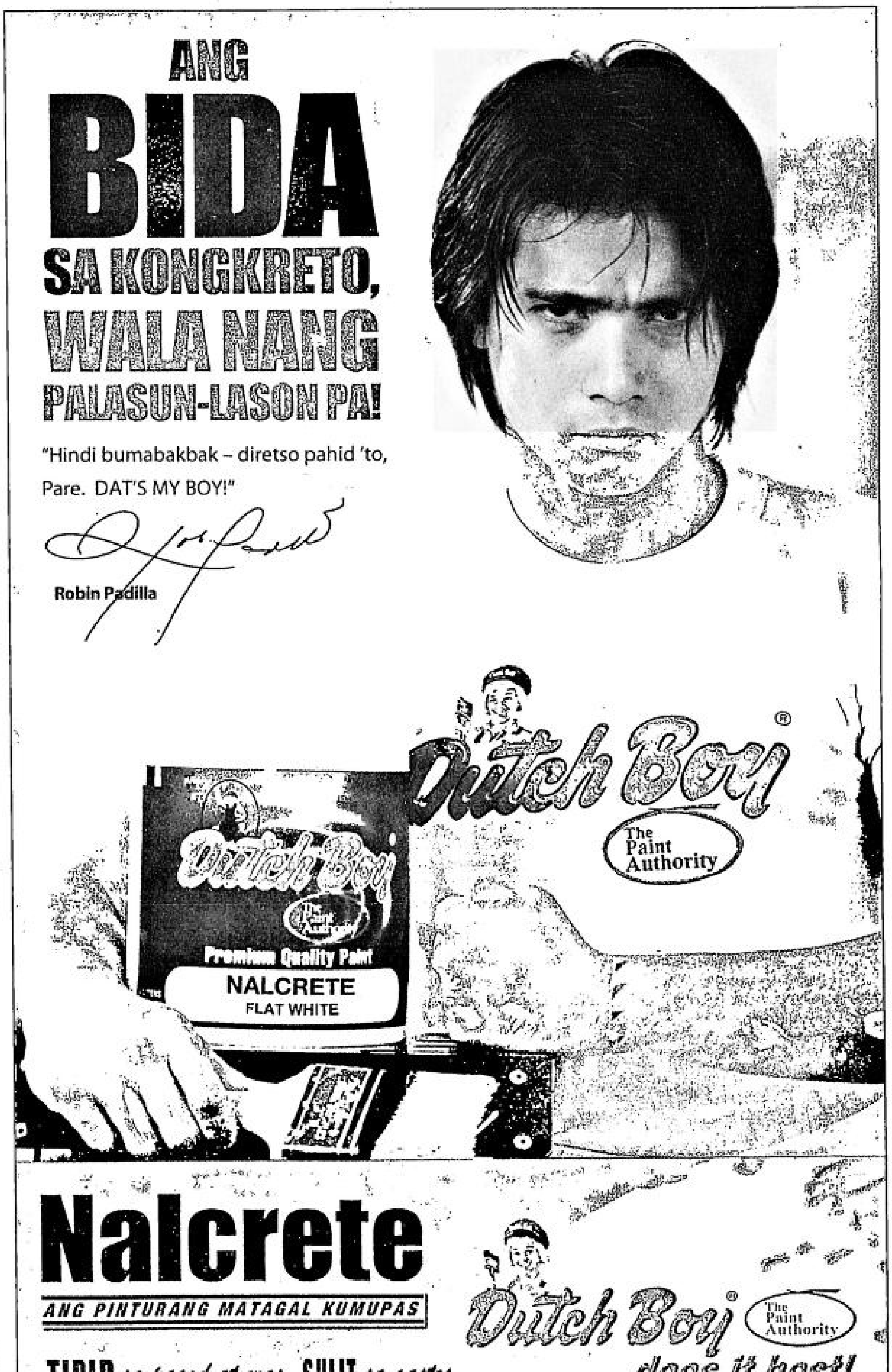
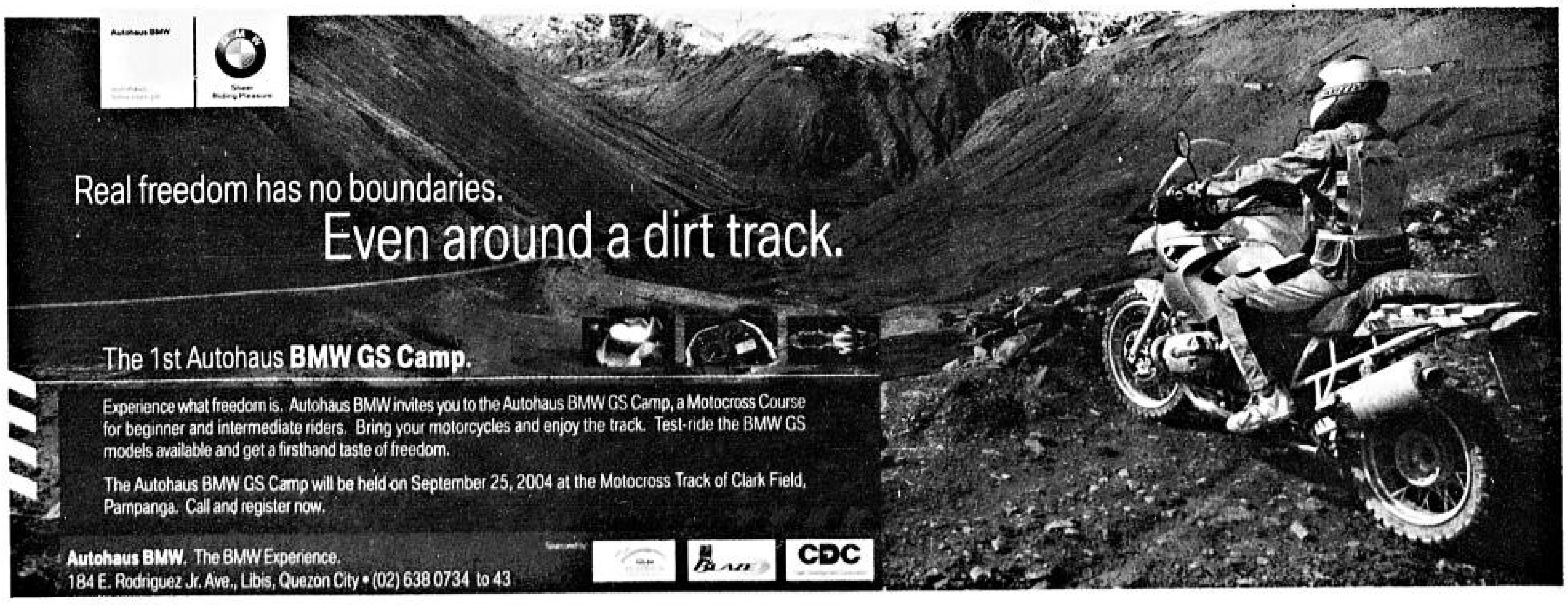


"Hindi bumabakbak – diretso pahid 'to, Pare. DAT'S MY BOY!"
Robin Padilla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Top gunners on target with new ball

By June Navarro

RITUALO

DUREMDES

ARIGO

PDI PHOTOS

REN-REN Ritualo sank eight three-pointers the other night. Kenneth Duremdes and Paolo Mendoza superbly hit their shots from the outside, and so did John Arigo against the Koreans in the ongoing PBA-KBL goodwill series.

All four showed crack forms shooting the new ball the Philippine Basketball Association will use when it opens its new season next month, although they have yet to develop a feel for the spheroid.

The ball, known as Molten GL7, has more grooves for better grip and handling than the ordinary one. The traditional basketball has eight grooves while the Molten GL7 has an additional four grooves marked by yellow stripes.

"I don't feel the difference yet but once we get used to it, it could probably improve my shooting," said Arigo, who made 15 points mostly from the outside during Alaska's 90-85 win over the SBS Stars on Saturday.

Sta. Lucia Realty's Duremdes fired 38 points against the SK Telecom Knights last week, 27 of them in the second half, while Mendoza shot torridly from three-point range.

"I can't tell which ball is better but I had an excellent grip on the leather that time," said Duremdes.

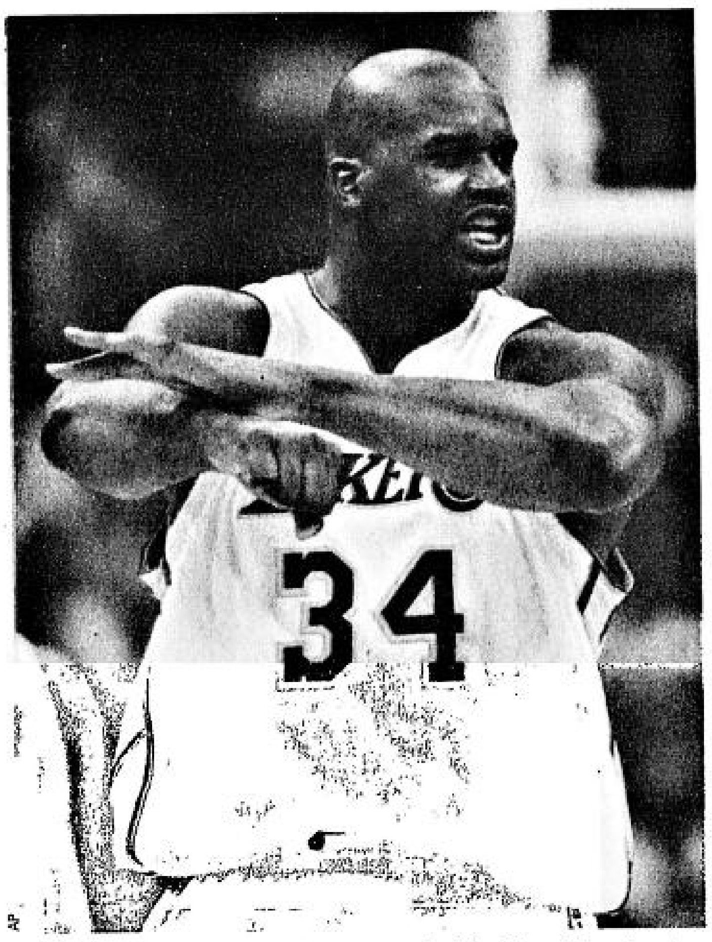
Three days later, Ritualo shot the lights out at the Emilio Aguinaldo College gym in Manila after knocking in eight triples using the same yellow-striped ball during the FedEx-SBS Stars encounter.

After Ritualo drained his last three-pointer, the game was stopped, with the Express ahead, 87-85, in the fourth due to a slippery floor.

PBA chief statistician Fidel Mangonon said top teams in the European league have started using the Molten GL7 along with squads from Portugal, France and Israel.

Mangonon added that the Fiba will start using the Molten GL7 in all of its sanctioned tournaments next year.

"The scoring in the PBA has improved by 8-10 points in the Fiesta Conference. The Molten GL7 could increase scoring by another five points in the coming season," said Mangonon.


AP

SHAQUILLE O'Neal feels he bore too much of the blame in Los Angeles.

Shaq: Lakers used me as a scapegoat

SANTA MONICA, California—Shaquille O'Neal believes the Los Angeles Lakers made him The Big Scapegoat.

"It was just guys upstairs who can't step up and do what they're supposed to do. They've got to have a scapegoat, and they know that I'm strong enough to be that scapegoat," said O'Neal, traded by the Lakers to Miami in July.

"Who's going to be the scapegoat now? Who are they going to point at now?" O'Neal said with a laugh.

The Heat's new center was back in town Saturday to host a kids' basketball camp.

O'Neal feels that he was unfairly blamed for the Lakers' failure to win the NBA title the past two seasons—including this year's loss to Detroit—after winning three in a row.

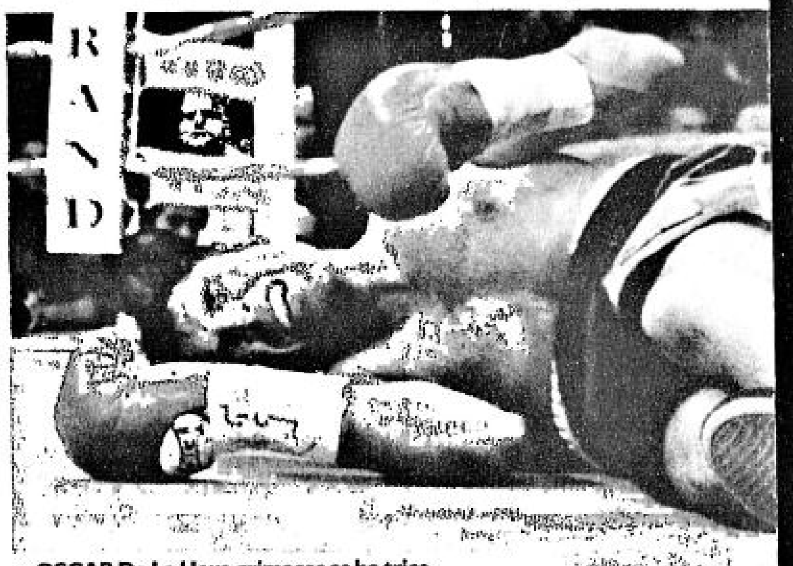
"My thing is, if I'm going to be the scapegoat, let me be in charge and let me do it my way," said O'Neal, whose friction with teammate Kobe Bryant was well documented. "So if I'm in charge and everybody knows I'm in charge and we're doing it my way and it don't work, then they can say 'hey, you did it.'

"And I'll say, 'You know what, I did it.'"

Despite their differences while with the Lakers, O'Neal said he was pleased that a sexual assault charge against Bryant was dropped earlier this month.

"I'm glad that he got off. You never want to see a player of his caliber go down for something like that," O'Neal said. "Now he can go back to being a family man."

After the Lakers announced that Phil Jackson wouldn't be retained as coach, O'Neal asked to be traded. Since Los Angeles dealt Gary Payton to Boston and Karl Malone may decide to play elsewhere, Bryant likely will be the Lakers' only remaining marquee name next season. *AP*


OSCAR De La Hoya grimaces as he tries to get up from the canvass. REUTERS

Hopkins k De La Hoy

LAS VEGAS—Bernard Hopkins suddenly ended a close fight with two left hooks to the body in the ninth round Saturday night to stop Oscar De La Hoya and ruin his bid to become the undisputed middleweight champion.

The punches put De La Hoya on the canvas, on his hands and knees in obvious pain. When De La Hoya rolled over on his back, referee Kenny Bayless stopped the fight at 1:38 of the ninth.

While Hopkins celebrated, De La Hoya remained on his knees, his face buried in his gloves. He repeatedly pounded the canvas in frustration after being stopped for the first time in his brilliant career.

"I felt a sense of urgency," Hopkins said. "I wasn't sure if I was winning or not."

Hopkins (45-2-1, 32 knockouts) was ahead on two scorecards and behind on a third in a cautiously fought bout when he suddenly landed the punches just below De La Hoya's rib cage to retain his undisputed middleweight title in his 19th title defense.

"A well-placed body shot," De La Hoya said.

De La Hoya (37-4) was a 2-1 underdog in only his second fight as a middleweight and was taking on a champion who hadn't lost in 11 years.

"I tried to do the impossible on paper—beat the middleweight champ coming up from 130 pounds," De La Hoya said.

Hopkins fought cautiously the first half of the fight, giving both De La Hoya and the sold-out crowd at the MGM Grand arena some cause for optimism. De La Hoya, who many thought would box and move, was the aggressor in many of the early exchanges as he moved forward against Hopkins.

"He came to fight," Hopkins said. "He did..'t come to run or look for a gift from the judges."

The pro-De La Hoya crowd cheered their fighter from the opening bell, screaming every time he landed a punch. Hopkins fought patiently, but as the rounds went on, his corner told him to pick up the pace and pressure De La Hoya more.

Still, De La Hoya was holdin
the fight came to a stunning
quieted the shocked crowd as
stayed on the canvas.

"He caught me right on the
said. "Believe me, I tried gettin
couldn't."

De La Hoya, who weighed
kg) to 156 lb (71 kg), had
once as a middleweight, but
this time was a big upgra
known Felix Sturm. Hopkin
since Roy Jones Jr. beat him
and he was primed for the pa
lifetime.

De La Hoya fought despi
11 stitches to repair a cut o
hand suffered three days b
fight. In his dressing room ju
the fight, he said the cut on
part of his hand just beneath t
ger was slightly swollen and a
he be allowed not to have the
on it.

But he said the hand didn
him, only the punches from
and stronger fighter who was
ing to be denied.

"It was a great shot, a great
hook," De La Hoya said.

The fight was eagerly anti
pated and expected to be th
richest non-heavyweight fight in boxing history. De La Hoya made at least $30 million, but the cost to his career might be greater. He was knocked out for the first time since turning pro after winning an Olympic gold medal in 1992.

Hopkins, who made only $300,000 in a fight just
nine months ago, got a minim
the biggest payday of his care
La Hoya. He came into the ri
of Frank Sinatra's "My Way," f
who stubbornly set his own co
it cost him millions of dollars.

Vengeful Archers rip Eagles . . .

From page A25

the end of the third period.

Cardona then started the fourth quarter with a triple while Ateneo opened with three consecutive turnovers. La Salle's relentless attack gave the Archers an 18-point bubble, 57-39, less than five minutes remaining.

Magnum Membrere tried to spark an Ateneo rally with back-to-back triples, but the Eagles could only pull within 10 points, 62-52, with less than two minutes left.

There was no hint of the lopsided finish in the first half, though, which La Salle took at 30-28 as Ateneo turned the ball over 17 times. The Archers also dominated the paint early, 22-12.

It was a sad ending for the Eagles, who remained on top almost the entire season before losing six of their last nine games.

Pumaren consoled Ateneo coach Sandy Arespacochaga after the game and congratulated him for his valiant effort. "I told him not to listen to critics. He deserves to be in Ateneo. He worked hard for it and he's a good fellow," said Pumaren.

In junior play, the UST Tiger Cubs and the Ateneo Eaglets forged another best-of-three championship series starting Thursday. The Cubs outlasted the La Salle Bengals, 76-71, while the Eaglets nipped the UP Junior Maroons, 65-63.

The scores:

First Game (Jrs)

UST 76—Badua 23, Crisostomo 17, Basa 16, Panahon 6, Dela Cruz 4, Fran 4, Revereza 4, Mejica 2, Alnajes 0, Zapanta 0.

LA SALLE 71—De Asis 20, Alkins 16, Salvador 15, Reyes 12, Fernandez 4, Karseboom 4, Posadas 0, Dino 0, Urra 0.

Quarters: 19-14, 42-37, 59-58, 76-71

Second Game (Jrs)

ATENEO 65—Reyes 22, Dizon 11, Medina 8, Tuason 8, Chiu 5, Austria 4, Manlapaz 3, Nadal 2, Perez 2, Santos 0, Tingson 0, Abellada 0, Gamboa 0.

UP 63—Vilanueva 14, Maniego 13, Aranas 11, Olan 10, Bautista 8, De Peralta 3, Olveros 2, Reyes 2, Marfori 0, Cruz 0, Lazo 0.

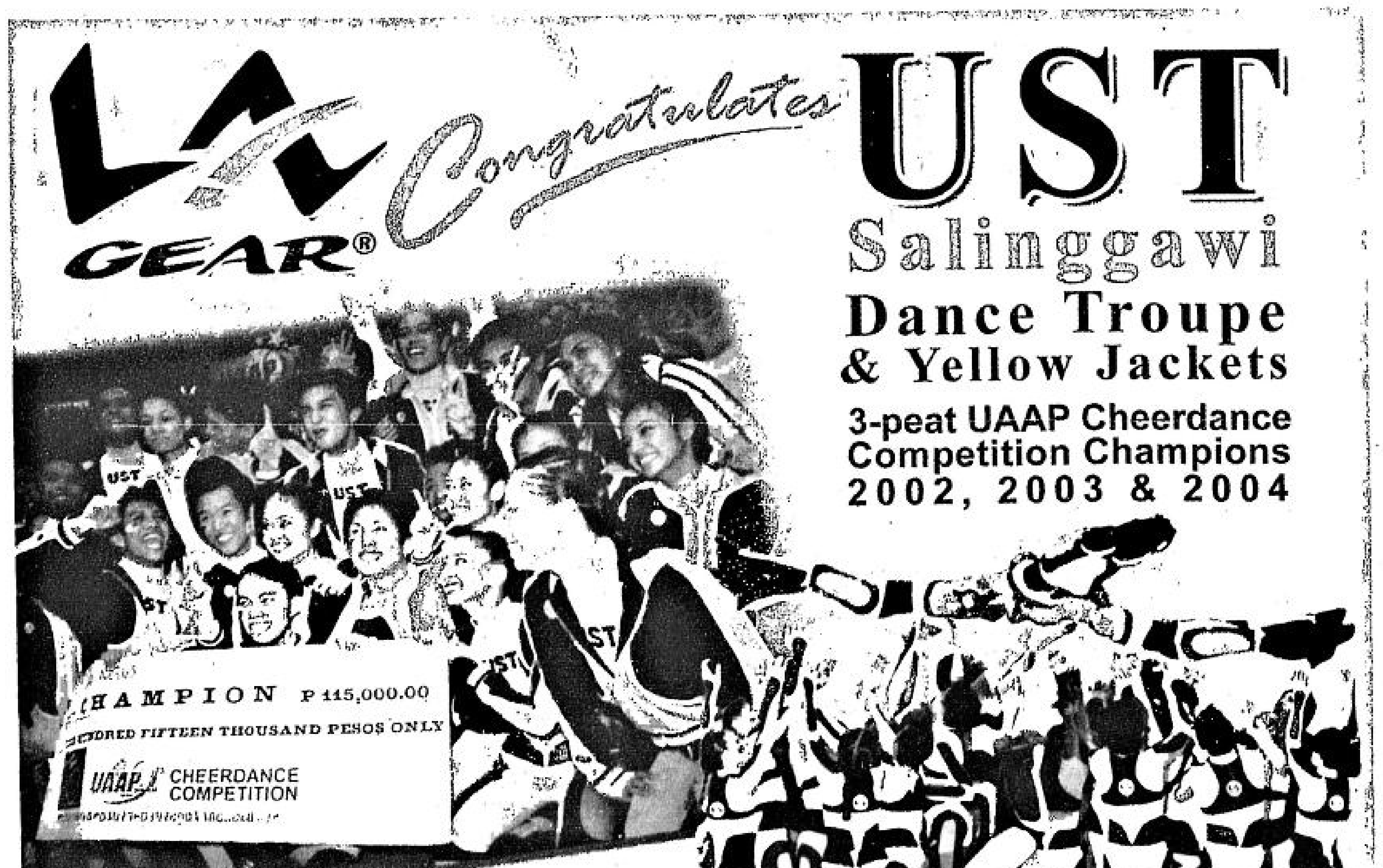
Quarters: 13-18, 34-35, 51-48, 65-63

Third Game (Srs)

LA SALLE 69—Cardona 24, Gaco 12, Cabatu 9, Casio 7, Araña 6, Villanueva 4, Yeo 3, Benitez 3, Tang 1, Gavino 0.

ATENEO 55—Membrere 11, Tenorio 11, Intal 10, Del Rosario 7, Kramer 6, Bugia 4, Aguilar 2, Arao 2, Quimson 2, Tiu 0, Barracoso 0, Ulchico 0, Escalona 0, Escueta 0.

Quarters: 13-13, 30-28, 49-35, 69-55.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Ex-pro Solis na

FORMER PBA star Al Solis of Tribu Sugbu and Nap Garcia of host Baguio have been named South and North Selection coaches, respectively, for the first NBC (National Basketball Championship) All-Star weekend set Oct. 1-2 in Baguio City.

"I'm very excited to be chosen as coach of the South All-Stars," said Solis, a former top-rated point guard in the pro league. "I hope this will be the start of something big in my coaching career."

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TIERRO: Impressive

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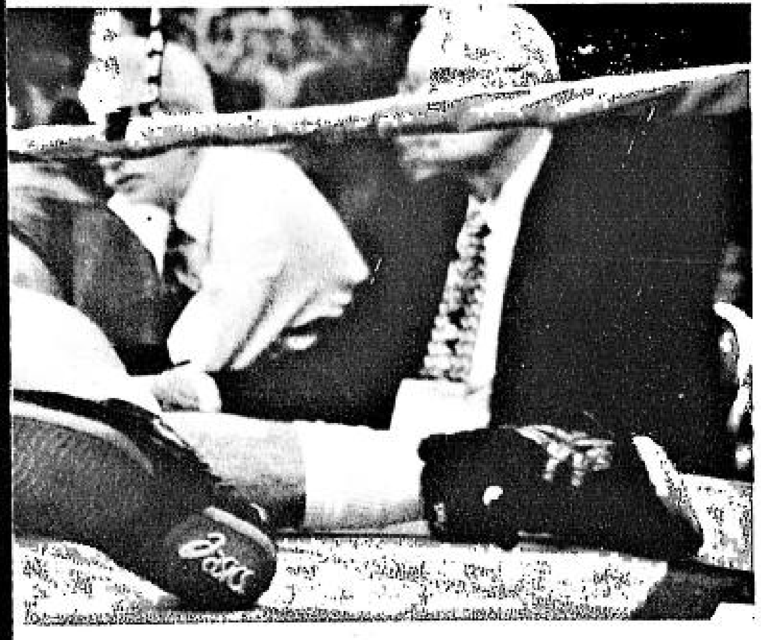

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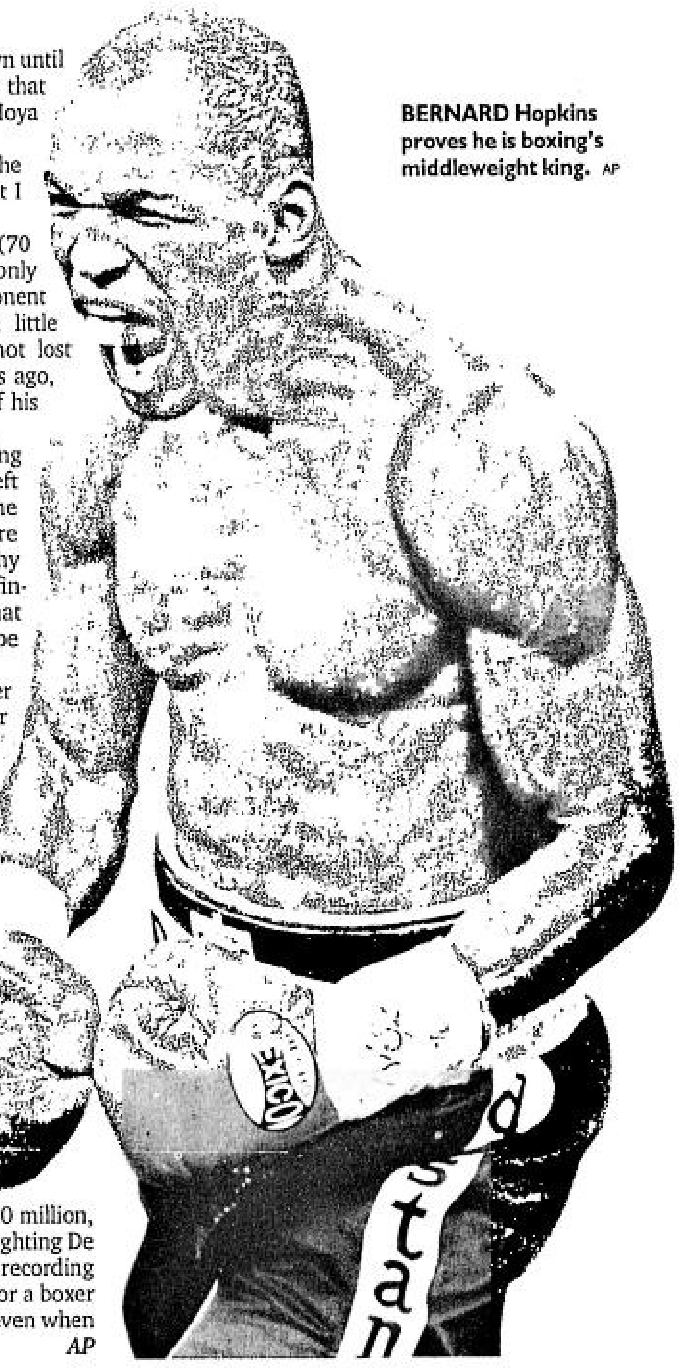

BERNARD Hopkins proves he is boxing's middleweight king. AP

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AP

amed All-Star coach

t day of the All-Star weekend e cage clinics for the fans, a erence, the elimination round n-tournament for clinic partici- hree-point shoot-out, two-ball and the slam dunk competi-

ampionship round of all side the All-Star game will be held

used Reymund Lingal of Spring Cooking Oil-Laguna and high-flying Marvin Mercado are the early favorites in the slam dunk event.

Solis and Garcia have been given the right to name four of their top players to the South and North squads. Two players each from the remaining three teams in the division—Forward Taguig, Batangas, Laguna Spring (North), Ozamiz Cotta, Iloilo Warriors and Cagayan de Oro Stars (South)—will complete the rosters.

ows Germans

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has our to bs in ffered him a slot in next year's Bundesliga (German Interclub Championships).

The club is sponsoring Tierro's travel expenses and is set to provide him with other incentives.

A protégé under Subic Bay Sports Management Inc.'s Beeyong Sison and sportsman Jean Henri Lhuillier, Tierro's potential was first spotted in last year's Cebuana Lhuillier Tennis Circuit.

His stellar performance on the court earned him the support of sports patron and tennis enthusiast Lhuillier who offered to fund his 3-month European trip.

According to Lhuillier, this is a great opportunity for the 6-foot-1 Tierro to make his base in Europe.

Benilde, Lyceum prop bids

DEFENDING champion College of St. Benilde and Lyceum of the Philippines won in convincing fashion Saturday to boost their bid for semifinal seats in the WNCAA 35th season basketball tournament at the St. Scholastica gym.

At the RTU gym, University of Asia & the Pacific barged into the semifinals of seniors volleyball by stopping Siena College, 25-21, 25-11, 25-15.

Lyceum routed neophyte Centro Escolar University, 71-57, to tie idle Rizal Technological University for the lead at 6-0.

In juniors play, De La Salle Zobel downed Siena College, 84-16.

Pacquiao rival decisions Salido, retains twin featherweight titles

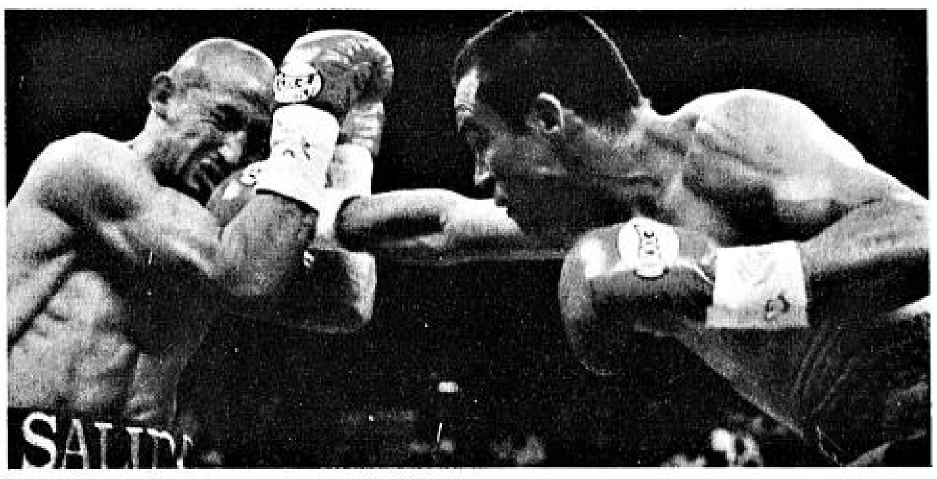
LAS VEGAS, Nevada—Mexico's Juan Manuel Marquez retained his World Boxing Association and International Boxing Federation featherweight titles here Saturday with a 12-round unanimous decision over compatriot Orlando Salido.

Marquez improved his record to 43-2-1, with 33 wins inside the distance, while Salido suffered his ninth defeat in 44 fights.

The three judges scored it 117-111, 117-111 and 118-110 for Marquez, 31.

Marquez was making the third defense of the IBF belt he won in February of last year in Las Vegas with a seventh-round technical knockout of compatriot Manuel Medina. It was his second defense of the WBA crown he won in November of 2003 with a victory over Derrick Gaines.

Marquez also retained both crowns against Filipino Manny Pacquiao via a controversial draw. *AFP*



JUAN Manuel Marquez of Mexico, who earned a controversial draw against Filipino Manny Pacquiao, is more convincing this time against compatriot Orlando Salido. AP

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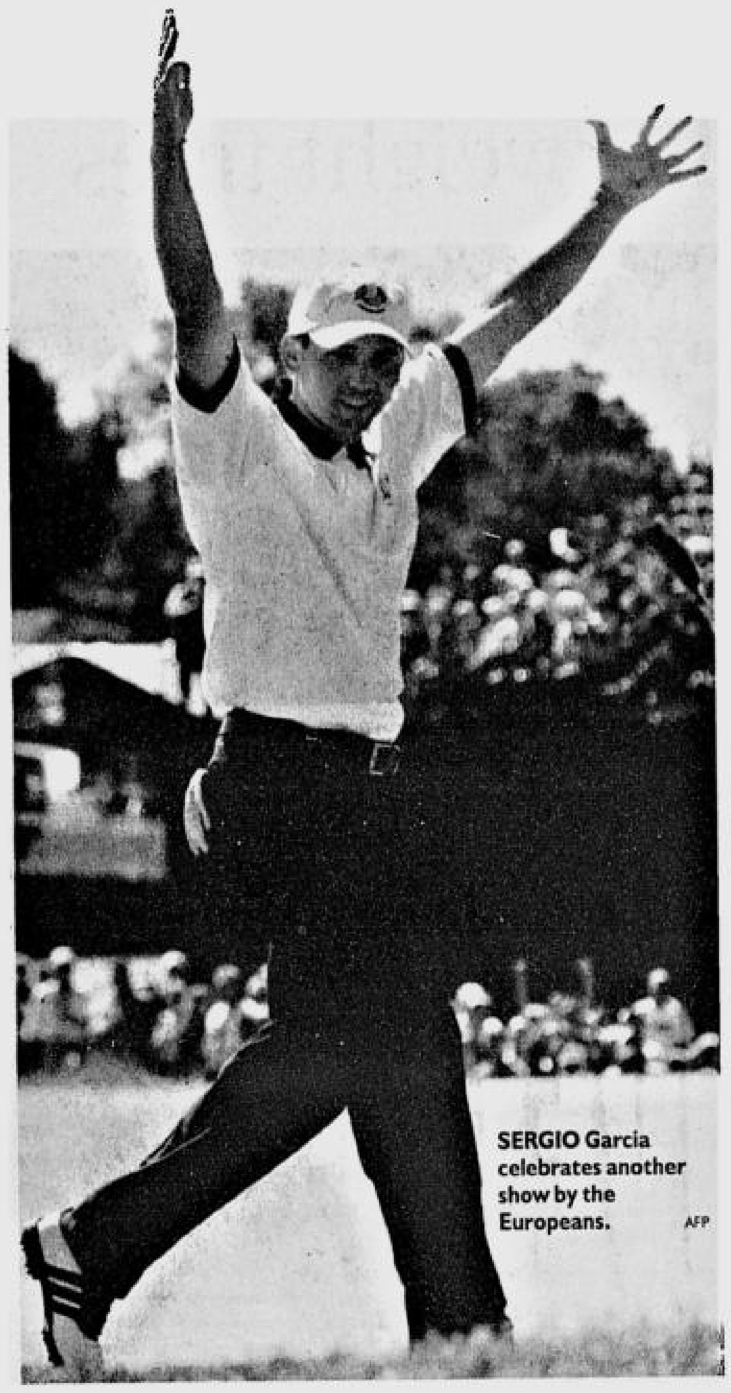

SERGIO Garcia celebrates another show by the Europeans. AFP

Europe nears Ryder title via record rout

BLOOMFIELD TOWNSHIP, Michigan—Sergio Garcia removed the flag from the 18th hole and waved it over his head. Padraig Harrington tossed his glove and cap into crowd that draped itself in European flags and sang "Ole, Ole!" from the top of its lungs. Darren Clarke lit up another cigar.

There was no need to wait for this juggernaut of a European team to celebrate at the Ryder Cup.

Sunday looks like a mere formality.

"I never in my wildest dreams would have thought we would have a six-point lead," captain Bernhard Langer said. "We came here as defending champions. We have the cup with us and we want to take it back home. So far, so good."

So far, it's been awesome.

Two English rookies in their Ryder Cup debut delivered the pivotal point Saturday morning. Sergio Garcia, Lee Westwood and Europe's reliable stars pounded the Americans in the afternoon.

When it was over, Europe had an 11-5 lead—its largest ever—and needed to win only three of 12 singles matches to capture the cup.

"It is possible? Sure, it's possible," Phil Mickelson said of an American comeback. "Is it likely? Probably not. For all intents and purposes, we've likely lost the cup. But we're going to try and win it."

It was the largest two-day lead since 1967, when Ben Hogan opened the Ryder Cup by introducing his team as "the 10 greatest golfers in the world."

The best 12 this week at Oakland Hills belong to Europe.

US captain Hal Sutton will send out his players Sunday in the order they qualified—from Tiger Woods at No. 1 to Stewart Cink at No. 12. Whenever a team is this far behind, it usually puts its best players at the top of the lineup to try to create momentum. Trouble is, Sutton has no idea who his best players are at this Ryder Cup.

Woods, Mickelson and Davis Love III have earned only one point. Jim Furyk and Chad Campbell don't have any.

Maybe that's why Sutton didn't bother to wag his finger and offer an ominous prediction that "I've got a good feeling about this," a la captain Ben Crenshaw at Brookline in 1999 when he was behind 10-6.

Sutton looked beat. He was out of tough talk.

"I pushed them as hard as I could," he said. "We almost responded this morning, and we lost energy after that."

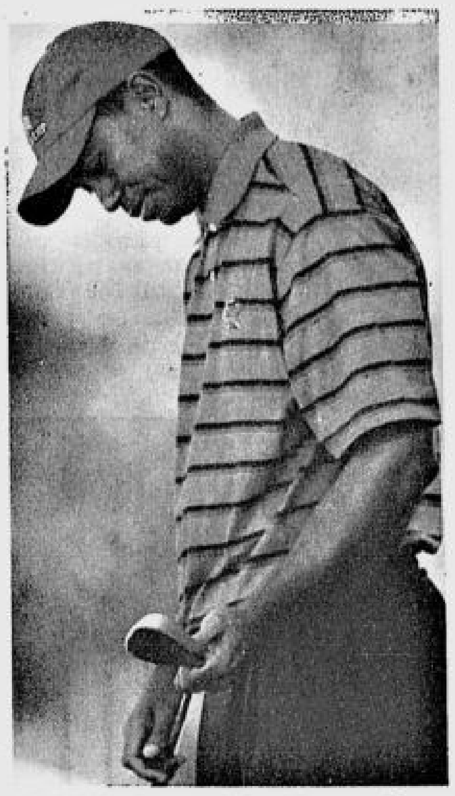
Europe has so thoroughly outplayed the home team that Paul Casey asked to go off first with hopes of playing Woods, telling Langer he has beaten him in the two tournaments they have played this year.

Asked about seeing Woods, Mickelson and Love at the top of the lineup, Langer looked as cool and confident as he has all week.

"I'm not scared at all," Langer said. "I'm actually pretty sure and convinced that out of the first three matches, I'd be very surprised if we don't get two points."

And it doesn't matter whom Europe sends out to play them.

After the Americans staged an impressive rally in better-ball matches—they had the potential for a sweep—Europe staved them off behind Casey and David Howell, who won the last two holes against Campbell and Furyk for a 1-up victory that sent a surge of confidence through their teammates. *AP*


TIGER Woods cuts a forlorn figure as the US team takes another beating. AFP

Bonds now preparing for playoffs

SAN FRANCISCO—Barry Bonds' black leather clubhouse chair was fully reclined, and the San Francisco slugger leaned back in it with a rare moment to relax after joining the 700 home run club.

The distraction of another milestone is gone, and Bonds is using every chance he can to save energy and prepare himself to play every game for the Giants' playoff push.

The past week has truly been mentally exhausting for the six-time NL MVP.

Bonds joined an exclusive club Friday night—only Babe Ruth (714) and Hank Aaron (755) have hit more homers—when he connected in the third inning against Jake Peavy for career homer No. 700. It was his fourth game going for the mark.

He hit a home run to left-center field bleachers for a solo shot, becoming the first player to reach 700 in 31 years. Bonds wasted no time getting to 701.

On Saturday, the 40-year-old Bonds led off the second inning against Padres left-hander David Wells with a solo shot to right-center on the first pitch. A tribute to Bonds was played on the scoreboard before the game, and he received a long ovation when he jogged out to take his position in left field and again when he stepped into the batter's box. *AP*

They call it 'The Ordeal at Oakland Hills'

BLOOMFIELD TOWNSHIP, Michigan—Talk about getting more bang for your euro.

Paul McGinley, an obscure Irishman ranked 67th in the world, has contributed more points to his team's Ryder Cup cause than Tiger Woods. Even more obscure Englishman David Howell, ranked one spot farther down and playing in his first and only match ever Saturday, now has as many as Phil Mickelson has here in three.

Spaniard Sergio Garcia, on the other hand, has almost as many points as the entire US team.

"Believe it or not," Garcia said, stifling a grin, "there are people who can play golf outside of the States."

The 35th installment of the Ryder Cup will go down in golf history as "The Ordeal at Oakland Hills."

The last time a team of overrated Americans came in for such a beating was only last month—anybody still remember the US men's Olympic basketball team?—but that shouldn't make this one any easier to take.

There are a dozen explanations for how the second day of the competition closed with Europe ahead 11-5, the biggest lead since the current format went into effect, but they can all be squeezed into one word: teamwork.

The United States arrived with the world's No. 2 and No. 4 players (Woods and Mickelson), three of the top 10, and five guys who owned 12 majors between them.

Europe's top player, Padraig Harrington, was ranked eighth, and the next major won by anybody on the continental side will be the first.

The average American pro ranked 19th and spent almost as much on fuel for his private jet as some of his opponents made last season.

The average European ranked 38th and usually flew coach.

But the numbers that matter on the fairways and greens at the Ryder Cup increasingly tilt toward the Europeans. They've won six of the last nine and No. 7 could be the easiest of all.

Asked about a comeback, Mickelson said, "Is it possible? Sure it's possible. Is it likely? Probably not." *AP*

PAL CHAMPS
Caloy Ferrariz (second from left), president of Los Hermanos de Heneral Santos athletic club, receives the overall champion's cup in the recent 27th Philippine Airlines Intersports Tournament from PAL executive vice president Henry So Uy (second from right) and Intersports chair Domingo T. Duerme Jr. (right). At left is awards night co-host Regine Tolentino.

US Open champ wins anew

BALI, Indonesia—US Open champion Svetlana Kuznetsova overpowered unseeded German Marlene Weingartner 6-1, 6-4, Sunday to win the Wismilak International and extend her unbeaten streak to 11 games.

The victory was the Russian's fifth tour title, and her second here on the Indonesian resort island of Bali. It means she will move up a spot to number five in the world rankings.

"It was tough to go all the way through after coming from the US Open," said Kuznetsova. "I was just doing my best."

Weingartner, who was playing in her first tour final, was unable to settle in the opening set against a barrage of powerful forehands by the Russian. She quickly found herself trailing 5-0.

Weingartner played several spectacular winners in the second set, and forced a break point against Kuznetsova. The Russian saved it with a backhand volley that Weingartner could only block.

Kuznetsova broke the German's service in the seventh game, when Weingartner netted a weak double-handed backhand. The 19-year-old then served out to win the match.

"Marlene couldn't find anything to play against me," said Kuznetsova. *AP*

KUZNETSOVA AFP

Life goes on after Japan league strike

TOKYO—Life went on in Japanese baseball Sunday as players, staging the first-ever strike in the 70-year history of the game here, tried to keep fans happy with autograph sessions and other events.

"Don't let the lights go out on pro baseball," read the front-page headline in the Nikkan Sports daily, showing a full-page picture of a pitch-black ball park amid a glittering night scene in the port city of Yokohama.

But players, opposed to the merger of two financially troubled clubs, kept themselves busy during the two-day walk-out which halted 12 weekend matches in the crucial final phase of the pennant races.

They mostly trained at home grounds on Saturday and mingled with fans on Sunday across the country where baseball is almost a religion.

Autograph sessions were also scheduled at baseball stadiums in Tokorozawa, Osaka, Sapporo and Fukuoka. *AFP*

More support thrown to ABC hosting plans

SPORTS patron Jean Henri Lhuillier, the chief backer of the RP-Cebuana Lhuillier men's team, expressed his optimism of the country hosting the ABC Olympic qualifiers following initial talks between Cebuana Lhuillier and the PBA.

"It has always been our intention to work with all the parties concerned with Philippine basketball toward developing an integrated and long-term basketball development program here," Lhuillier stated. "Hosting next year's ABC championships in the country, an opportunity offered to us when I met with Fiba officials in Taipei during the Jones Cup, will certainly show that finally, everyone is cooperating toward this goal."

The PBA initiated the talks with Cebuana Lhuillier, since the latter already has an existing sponsorship agreement with the BAP, basketball's ruling body in the country until 2006.

"We are presently looking at the proposed program by the PBA that seeks to expand their role in forming the national team beyond their original agreement with the BAP to take care of only the Asian Games," said Danny Francisco, Cebuana Lhuillier's special project director and a former national cager.

NOTICE OF DISSOLUTION

Notice is hereby given that the Amended Articles of Incorporation of MMLDC, INC. (the "Corporation") which shortened the term of its corporate existence to end on October 15, 2004 and thereby dissolving the said corporation on said date, has been approved by its Board of Directors and shareholders at duly constituted meetings both held on September 1, 2004.

All persons having claims against said corporation are requested to present same at the Corporation's principal place of business located at the 8/F Lopez Building, Ortigas Avenue, Pasig City.

This announcement will serve as notice to all concerned of the legal dissolution of the aforesaid corporation.

GIL S. SANDIEGO
Corporate Secretary

(PDI - September 20, 27 & October 4, 2004)

GAB approves Sept. 25 WBA Showdown

THE GAMES and Amusements Board has approved the staging of the "WBF Showdown" card on Sept. 25 at the Elorde Ballroom in Parañaque to commemorate the 100th birth anniversary of the late Lope "Papa" Sarreal.

GAB chair Eduardo Villanueva said the decision to accredit the promotion "until all documents will be received" came after a hearing was conducted regarding the World Boxing Foundation's upcoming bouts.

Villanueva is also slated to meet WBF president Mick Croucher of Australia on Sept. 23 to discuss the WBF's bid to establish its presence in the country.

"This is a good opportunity for Filipino boxers to excel," said Villanueva. *Salven Lagumbay, Contributor*

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RACE HOTSHOT
Ulysses Maningding, 18, cruises to a fourth straight novice best time of the day honors in the Slalom Grand Prix at SM Fairview.

Indian envoy backs FIBL

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

LOW-PROFILE Dilip Budhrani is one of the most underrated men in Philippine sports. Still, he is all substance when it comes to organizing sporting events. A man with amazing reserves of energy, zeal and grit, Dilip is a former marathon organizer and presently the commissioner of the Filipino-Indian Basketball League (FIBL).

Now in his early 40s, Dilip is best remembered for organizing the popular Converse 10K Classic, California Raisin 10K Race, Dutch Boy Cycling Classic, California Raisin 60K Cycling Race and the Fitness International Duathlon, a run-bike competition held in Makati City. He also staged concerts and special shows during his college days at La Salle University.

After spending four and a half years in Burbank, California, where he worked for a clothing company, Dilip returned to the Philippines and launched the FIBL in 1999 to promote sports and brotherhood among the members of the Fil-Indian community.

The FIBL opens its fifth year on Sunday, Sept. 26, at the Makati Coliseum, with four teams in the fold, namely, the defending champion Bombay Bombers, who will be missing the services of two-time FIBL Most Valuable Player Kishore Mirpuri due to injury; former champions Knights, the Kings of ex-PBA player Mike Advani and the Blue Sharks.

On Saturday, Sept. 25, the FIBL will also tender a pre-opening cocktail party for team owners, players, sponsors from Honda Cars Caloocan and Globe Platinum and special guests Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay, PBA Commissioner Noli Eala and PBL Commissioner Chino Trinidad. The affair will be held at the Forbes Park residence of India's ambassador to the Philippines, Ambassador Navrehka Sharma, in whose honor this year's FIBL Ambassador's Cup is being held.

Although he has no pretensions that it will take a long time before the league can produce Fil-Indian players who can dominate the PBA, it does not mean that the FIBL does not have the talent. "In fact," Dilip stressed, "one of our players, Mike Advani, used to play for Barangay Ginebra before he retired to concentrate on his business." He added there are several promising rookies in the FIBL at present, including a dunker, Pramdeep Brar, who plays for the Blue Sharks; and flashy Knights' point guard Michael Saldhana, whose game resembles that of Alaska playmaker Mike Cortez.

***

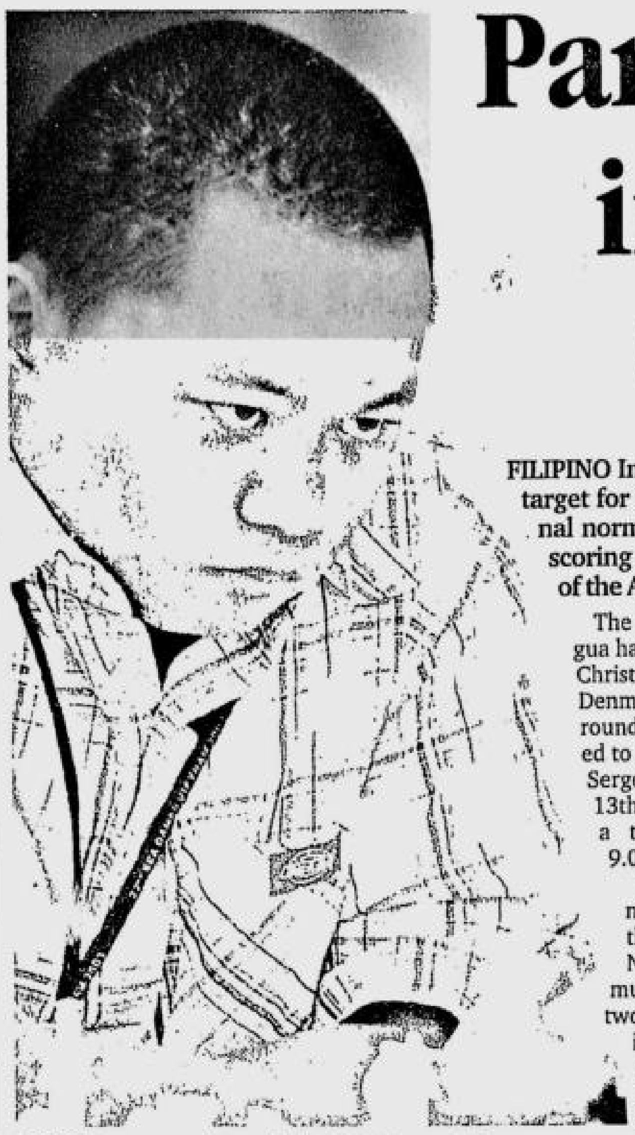
LETRAN REUNION. Founded 384 years ago, Colegio de San Juan de Letran produced many national leaders, including Philippine Presidents Emilio Aguinaldo, Manuel Quezon, Sergio Osmeña and José Laurel. Letran also produced national athletes Rafael de Leon and Renato Unso in track and field, Filomeno Mariano, Antonio Villanueva, Felicisimo Fajardo, Lauro Mumar, Freddie Webb and Avelino "Samboy" Lim in basketball, the Abratique brothers and Dean Vargas in taekwondo, Basanung Sambiao in swimming and former Sen. Tito Sotto in bowling, among others.

Quezon was the first president of the defunct Philippine Amateur Athletic Federation, forerunner of the Philippine Olympic Committee, while many other Letranites were also outstanding sports leaders like former POC president Julian Malonso, Eugenio "Gene" Puyat in boxing, Salvador Andrada in tennis, Benjamin Ramos in rowing and Dr. Anthony Nicanor Jr. in the Philippines Sports Commission.

On Saturday, Oct. 16, Letran will host a reunion of its former athletes starting at 2 p.m. in Letran Intramuros. Deceased athletes will be represented by their nearest kin. On the other hand, former athletic moderators and coaches are also invited, including POC president Celso Dayrit, whose father, Francisco Dayrit, was an instructor in fencing. Only two schools had fencing then, Letran and University of the Philippines.

The others invited are those who made good but missed the national team, namely, Luis Tabuena, Herminio Astorga, Alfredo Sagarbarria and Agustin Salgado, brother-in-law of President Macapagal-Arroyo. The other invitees are those who contributed to sports development in Letran, including Supreme Court Justice Cayetano Arellano, football players Manuel Nieto Sr., Benito Lopez, the Pacheco brothers, Insular Life chair Vicente Ayllon and cheerleader Cesar Zalamea, to name a few.

Paragua still in hunt for GM result



MARK Paragua needs two wins in his last two matches. EDWIN BACASMAS

FILIPINO International Master Mark Paragua remained on target for his second straight crown and the third and final norm he needs to earn a full grandmaster's title by scoring 1.5 points in two late rounds in the second leg of the Alushta Tournament in Crimea, Ukraine.

The 20-year-old Paragua halved the point with Christian Pedersen of Denmark in the 12th round and then proceeded to outplay Russian IM Sergey Vokarev in the 13th to push his total to a tournament-leading 9.0 points.

But in order to finally gain the GM title, the Philippines' No.1-ranked player must hurdle his last two matches, including a crucial 14th round duel with Russian GM Veniamen Shtyrenkov.

Paragua's final round opponent—IM Yuriy Kuzubov—is no pushover either.

The young Ukrainian is technically already a GM, having earned his third norm in the first of the three-leg Alushta series.

Kuzubov is currently the world's second youngest GM or GM-elect at 14 years, seven months and 12 days.

Paragua plays the black pieces against Shtyrenkov, one of the three GMs in the tournament, and white versus the dangerous Kuzubov.

The 16-man Category IX event with an average rating of 2454 requires a player to score at least 11 points to gain a GM norm and 7.5 points for an IM norm. *Marlon Bernardino*

Stand-in IM Garma vaults into lead

TAGAYTAY CITY—International Master Chito Garma rolled to his second straight win last night to grab the solo lead in the National Chess Championships at the Tagaytay International Convention Center here.

Garma, a two-time Olympian who made the tournament only as one of four replacements, whipped erstwhile co-leader and top qualifier National Master Oliver Barbosa in 25 moves of Sicilian-Skirmish game.

"*Hindi ko sasayangin ang pagkakataon na ibinigay sa akin para mai-*represent *ulit ang bansa sa* Olympiad," said Garma, who beat NM Emmanuel Senador in the first round.

Sharing the spotlight with Garma was 10-year-old boy wonder Wesley So, who bounced back from an opening round loss to NM Leonardo Carlos with a stunning 37-move win over Fide Master Jesse Noel Sales in their Bishop Opening encounter.

Carlos settled for a draw this time against NM Emmanuel Senador after 25 moves of another Bishop Opening.

Top seed Ronald Dableo, who lost his opener against fellow IM Barlo Nadera, drew with NM Darwin Laylo in just 15 moves of English Opening.

In women's play, unheralded Loreshyl Cuizon beat giant-killer Daisy Rivera in 56 moves of Caro-Kann to gain the solo lead with 2.0 points.

Rivera, who beat top seed WIM Beverly Mendoza in the first, is stuck at 1.0.

WNM Carmelita Abanes defeated WNM Carmelita Alvarez in 41 moves of Slav to take second spot with 1.5 points.

WFM Sheerie Joy Lomibao debuted with a draw against WIM Cristine Rose Mariano in 15 moves of Dutch while WNM Kathryn Ann Cruz also halved the point with Mendoza. *Marlon Bernardino, Contributor*

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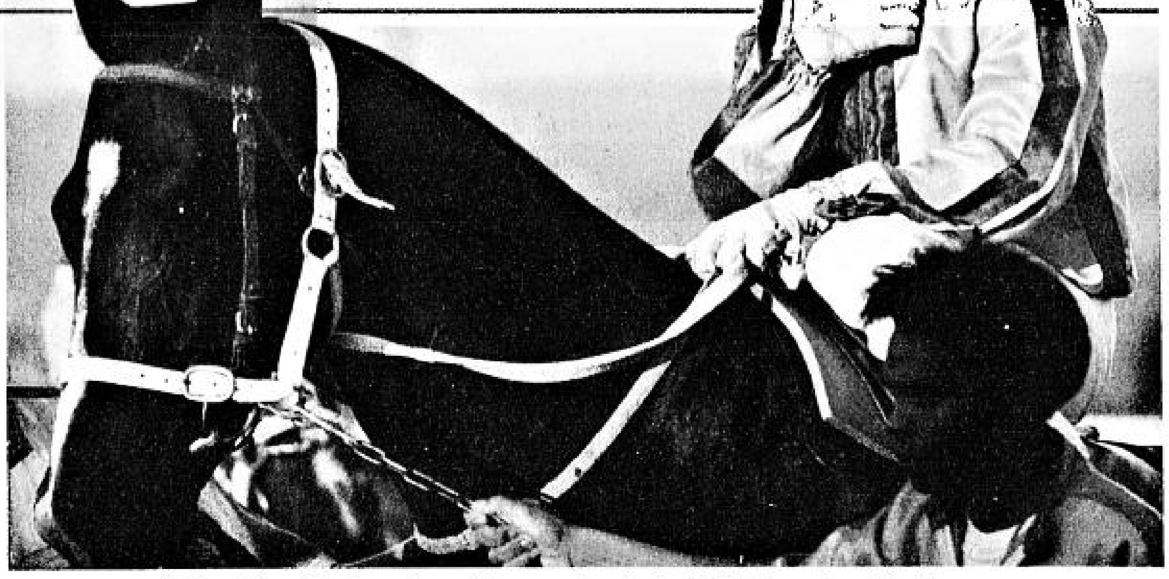


JOCKEY Antonio Alcasid heads back to the stable on top of explosive British Cup winner Key Apo. JESS YUSON

30TH MARHO RACES

D'ansoy, Key Apo outkick rivals

By Edwin Villanueva, *contributor*

LOCAL galloper Dandansoy and classy import Key Apo topped their respective fields to share top billing in the Marho 30th Anniversary racefest yesterday at the Santa Ana Park.

Flashing her patented late rush, Dandansoy captured the Smart-Eduardo Cojuangco Jr. Cup, while Key Apo, showing why he's the No. 1 import around, claimed the British Cup.

In the Cojuangco Cup honoring the founding chair-president of Marho, Dandansoy put on a big kick down the stretch to turn back Ouzo and win the 1,600-meter event by two lengths.

KEY Apo owner Putch Puyat takes his place at the podium.

The five-year-old bay mare owned by Mandaluyong Rep. Benhur Abalos bagged P600,000 under the guidance of Dominador "Rapid Fire" Borbe Jr., while Hermie Esguerra's Ouzo, ridden by Pat Dilema, settled for P225,000.

"*Nakuha sa tiyaga* (My patience paid off)," gushed Borbe, who took over the reins from Jonathan Hernandez

Dandansoy, sired by Lioubovnik out of Pain in the Neck and bred by Marho chair Sandy Javier, clocked 1:39.8 (23.5-22.5-24.5-27). Being There arrived fourth, followed by Cutting Edge, Neat Laurel, top pick West Bound, Sexiest and Suonos.

Ouzo, who won the Flash Mile two weeks ago, carried the march as expected and appeared headed for a wire-to-wire romp until Dandansoy peeled off from a tight bunch at the top of the stretch and unloaded a searing rally.

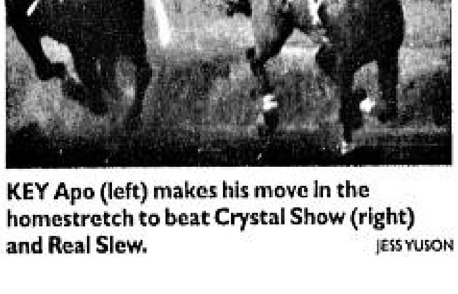
In the British Cup, also disputed over the mile, Key Apo, owned by Marho chief Aristeo "Putch" Puyat, bucked an early pressure by Crystal Show then quashed a bid by Real Slew in the stretch to prevail by two lengths.

The Johnny Sordan-trained Key Apo, a five-year-old bay colt sired by Perugino out of Affotee and winner of the opening leg of the Imports Stakes Series, pocketed P250,000. He clocked 1:40 flat (23-23.5-24.5-28).

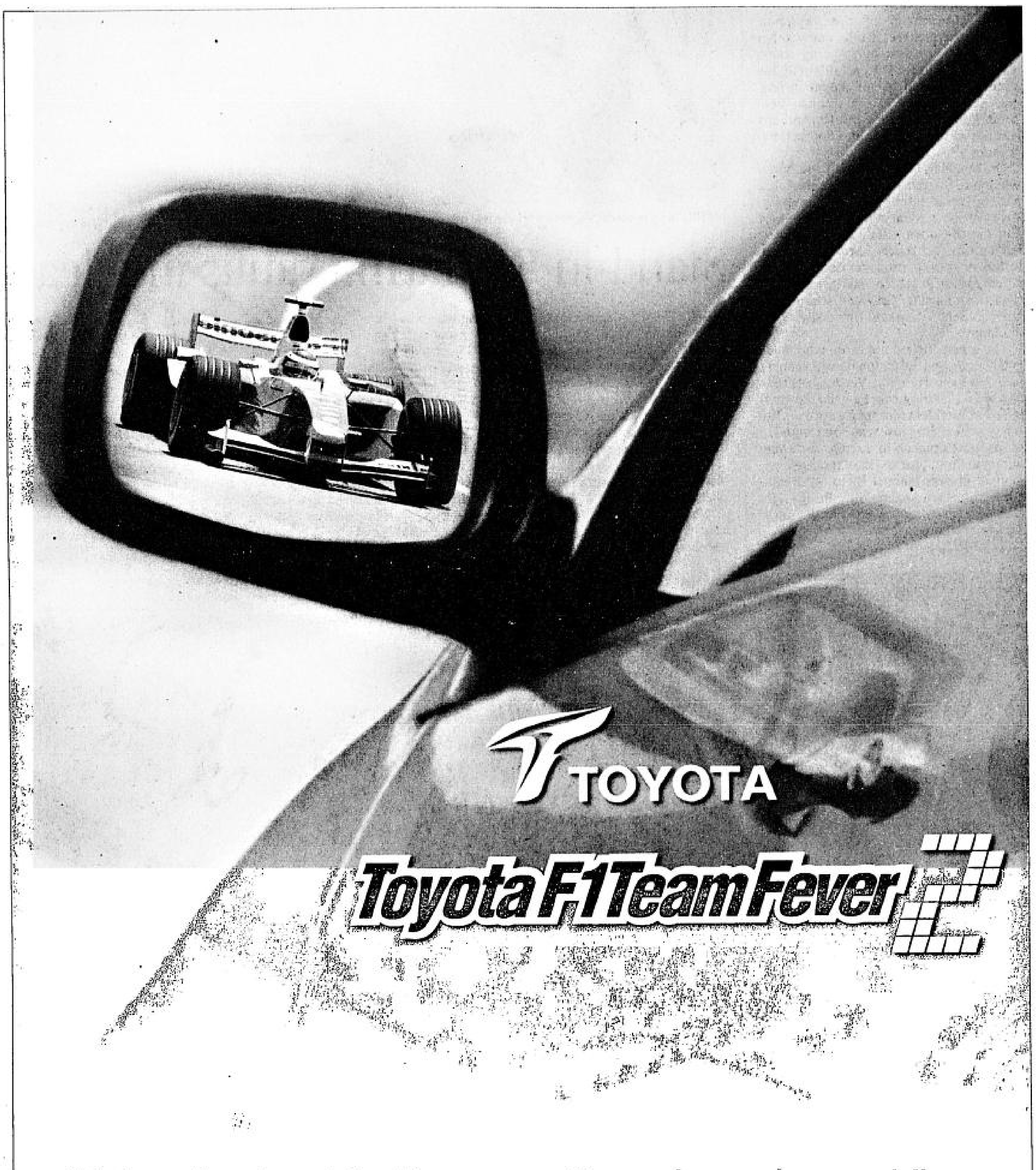
"*Alam kong may lutsa kay* Crystal Show *kaya di ko inapura* (I know Crystal Show will apply early pressure so I just bided my time)," said Key Apo's jockey Antonio Alcasid Jr.

Earlier, Esguerra's Bulakeña ruled the Smart-Pedro Cojuangco Cup, one of the special races honoring the 15 founders of Marho.

"It's been a successful staging of Marho's 30th anniversary. Thank you very much to all those who supported us like Smart, the Philracom and the *bayang karerista*," said Puyat.



KEY Apo (left) makes his move in the homestretch to beat Crystal Show (right) and Real Slew. JESS YUSON



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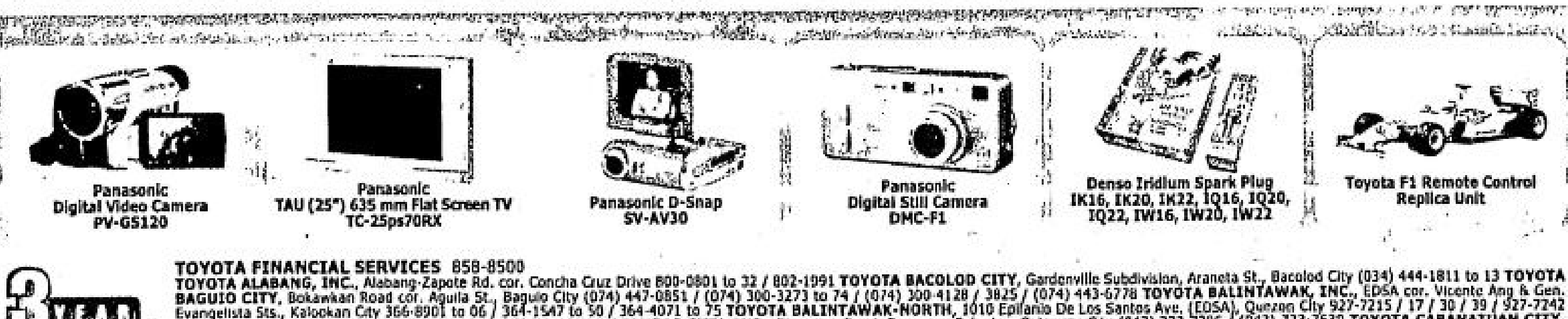

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ENTERTAINMENT

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STARRY STARRY night. (From left) Angeli P. Valenciano, Martin Nievera, Gary Valenciano, Richard Merk and others perform at the latter's bar Thursday.

MANDY NAVASERO

Artists turn out 'for a friend' /A40

'Home Alone' star jailed for drugs /A35

MACAULAY CULKIN, now 24

Screen goddess Sophia Loren turns 70 today /A38

"EVERYTHING you see, I owe to spaghetti," says the new septuagenarian Loren.

Nullify film fest selection process, says producer

By Marinel R. Cruz

THE SELECTION process of the Metro Manila Film Festival should be nullified because its officials made "a mockery of its authority" when they chose the eight official entries, according to the independent film company MLR Films.

The MLR Films entry, "Minsan Pa," was not among the final eight films chosen to be part of the festival in December.

"The evidence presented by us producers would reveal the kind of selection process that was conducted," MLR Films producer, lawyer Joji Alonso, told INQUIRER Entertainment last Saturday. "There are a number of rules that they (officials) did not follow."

Alonso last month protested that MMFF officials violated festival rules when they allowed the inclusion of four films all "connected" to Regal Entertainment's Lily Monteverde among the final eight.

Alonso had said four of the movies in the final lineup—"Mano Po 3," "Aishite Imasu 1941," "Que Sera Sera," and "Sigaw"—were all "productions of the Monteverde group."

"Que Sera Sera" was identified in the festival lineup as a production of Regal Entertainment, "Sigaw" of MegaVision and "Aishite Imasu 1941" of BasFilms Productions. MaQ Productions, said to be a satellite company of Regal, is producing "Mano Po 3."

MLR Films is producing "Minsan Pa," starring Jomari Yllana and Ara Mina, which did not qualify for the year-end festival.

In a Sept. 8 letter to MMFF overall chair Bayani Fernando, who is also the chair of the Metro Manila Development Authority, Alonso accused the MMFF executive committee of "ball-tossing," adding that, "instead of immediately resolving the protest raised, it has employed different kinds of delaying tactics, making a senseless mockery of its authority."

According to Alonso, lawyer Mel Trinidad was asked to "assist" in the evaluation of documents previously presented to the executive committee. She said despite Trinidad's findings, as well as the data gathered by MMDA chief of staff Rolando Josef, the execom has "insufferably refused to take a stand and resolve the matter."

Alonso was referring to, among others, copies of documents from the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) certifying that BasFilms Production is not registered with the SEC, that MaQ's registration had been revoked on Nov. 3, 2003, and that MegaVision committed a "major delinquency" when it failed to obtain its stock and transfer book.

INQUIRER Entertainment last week obtained a copy of a document certifying that MegaVision complied with SEC requirements and paid the appropriate penalties last Aug. 1.

INQUIRER Entertainment also obtained copies of SEC documents lifting the revocation of MaQ's registration on Aug. 24.

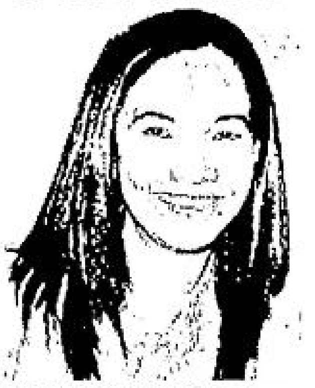
"The decision to include (MaQ's) film entry in the festival should be considered null and void," Alonso said in her letter to Fernando, "considering that at the time the decision was rendered, MaQ Productions was not a corporation.

"In the absence of the certificate of registration at the time of the filing of application (for inclusion in the festival) and the (promulgation of the) decision, (MaQ) has no legal capacity to act as a corporation," she added.

Alonso also argued that with theater owner Ng Meng Tam being a member of the MMFF execom and his son Marcus Ng being part of the selection committee, "there exists a great possibility of partiality in their decision to favor Regal Films."

Ng Meng Tam, president of the Metro Manila Theaters Association, is a stockholder of Regal Entertainment.

"The existence of interlocking interests in this case and the slightest inclination of bias are more than sufficient for them to inhibit themselves from taking any part in the selection process," Alonso said of the Ngs.



RULE BREAKERS. "There are a number of rules (film fest officials) did not follow," says Alonso.

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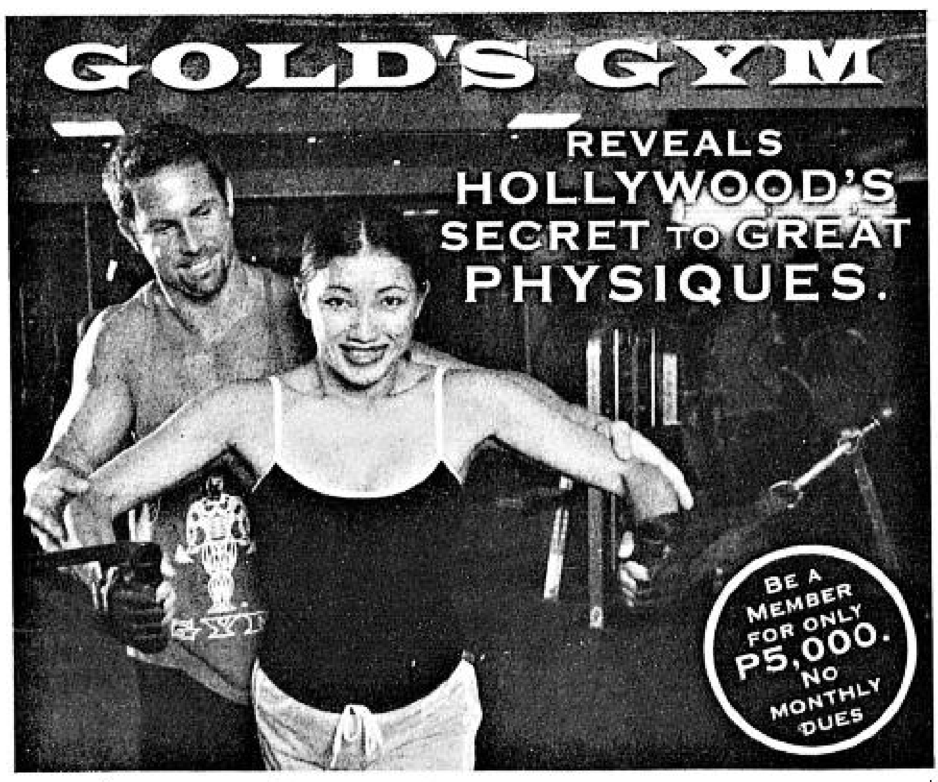

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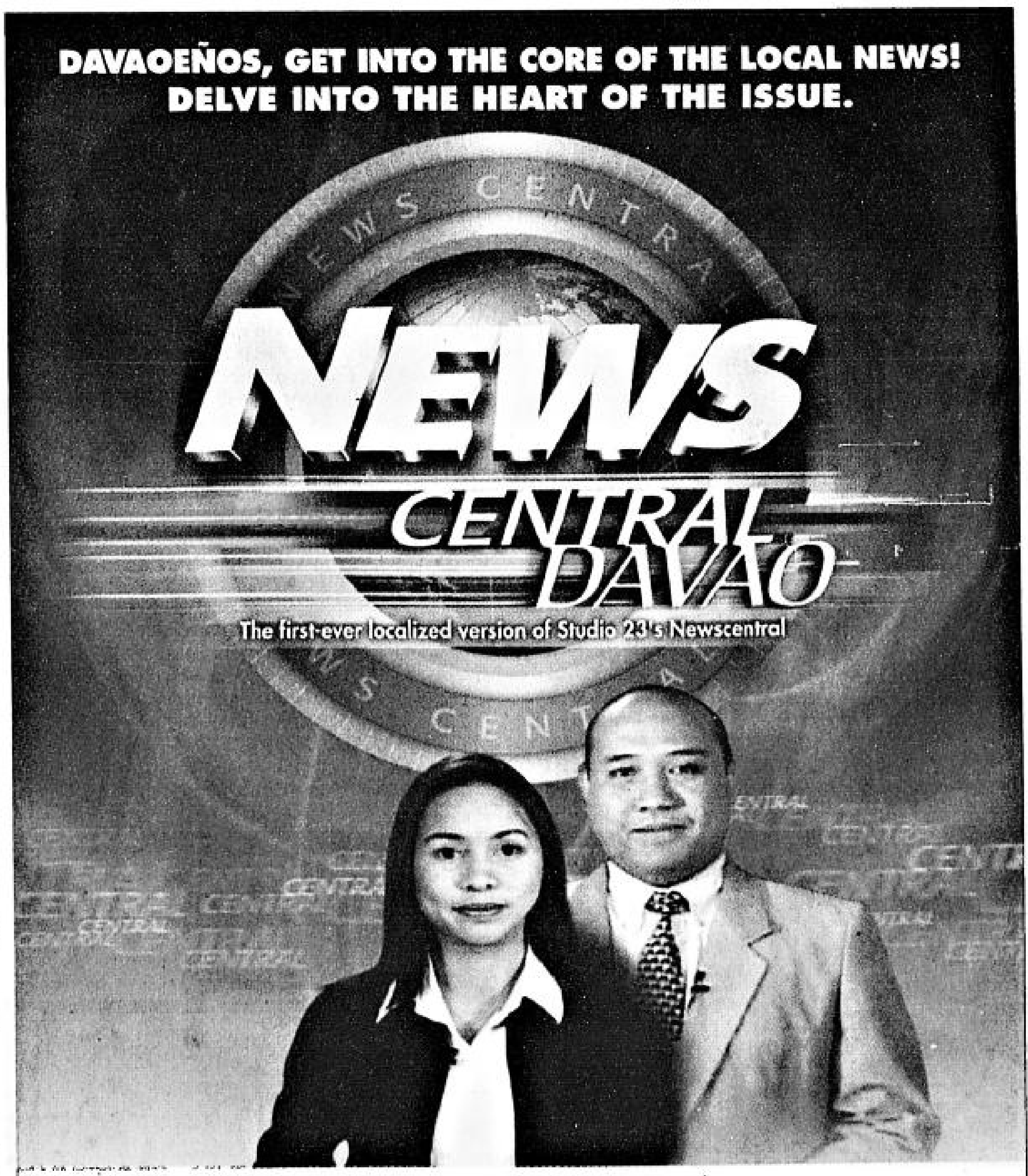

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COGIE DOMINGO and the 'package deal'

WALKING TALL in black leather high-cut pair that is a Nike-Kenneth Cole creation

FREE AGAIN. He wore this prisoner's shirt in one scene of "Deathrow."

AWARD-WINNING. He has worn this suit to four awards shows, but "no one has noticed."

NOT BY DESIGN. The Penshoppe jeans got ripped because of age, not design.

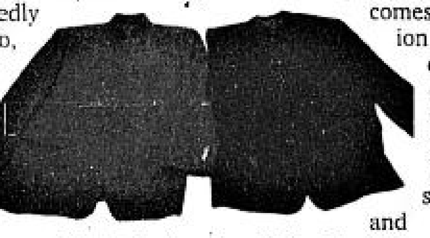
By Marinel R. Cruz
Photos by Jim Guiao Punzalan

CONTROVERSIAL young actor Cogie Domingo has resigned himself to the fact that show business and intrigues come as a "package deal."

"I've learned to accept that show biz thrives on intrigue," says Cogie who, at 19, has already dealt with more than a star's usual share of controversies, especially his alleged use of prohibited drugs, which he and his family consistently deny. "That is why I ignore rumors, unless they hit me below the belt. They are not true, anyway."

For advice, Cogie goes to three people: his mother, Zen Fernandez, manager, Joji Dingcong, and his friend, fellow actor Patrick Garcia.

"Every time my mom hears or reads something about what I supposedly did or didn't do, she makes sure to talk to me about it," Cogie tells INQUIRER Entertainment at the family's condominium unit in Makati City. "With her, you don't even have to ask for advice. It's automatic."



The biggest lesson he says he has learned from mom is to always be humble and respectful of other people. From his manager Joji, it is "to give my best if I really want to make it in show biz."

Among his fellow actors, he says Patrick is closest to him. "I can tell him anything I want. He's a very serious person. I think he's mature for his age."

Cogie says acting was his childhood dream. "*Maarte na kasi talaga ako kahit nung bata pa ako,*" he says. Actor-commercial model Boy 2 Quizon and the latter's actor uncle, Vandolph, motivated him to join show biz, he says.

"I met Boy 2 because his mom was once my mom's client in her business," Cogie recalls. "A lot of times, I would hang out at Boy 2's house, which was also where I met Vandolph."

When he was 10 years old, Cogie joined the cast of ABS-CBN's "Cyberkada." He was featured in the Regal suspense-drama, "Sa Piling ng mga Aswang," opposite no less than Maricel Soriano. The following year, he got an even bigger break when he became part of Jose Javier Reyes' "Yakapin Mo ang Umaga," where he played son to Christopher de Leon and Lorna Tolentino.

He co-starred with actor-director Eddie Garcia in the award-winning film fest entry, "Deathrow," directed by Joel Lamangan. He was later launched as a teen star in "Cool Dudes," with James Blanco and Danilo Barrios.

Despite his achievements in the movies, Cogie considers himself merely lucky. "I think I was just lucky I was able to work with excellent actors and directors," he says. "They were really patient with me. I didn't want to disappoint them so I did the best I could."

OUT OF THE CLOSET

Cogie says he is most comfortable being on GMA 7's weekly youth show, "Joy Ride." "I play a character named Jason," he says. "He's rich and a spoiled brat. He found out he has a brother who is his total opposite.

"I'm not like him, though," Cogie adds, "especially when it comes to fashion preference. The character is more into polos, long sleeves and formal suits. Ricky Martin type. I don't like wearing long sleeves. I became an actor because I don't like wearing office attire."

Shirts. "I like this because it is the most colorful of all my shirts. I got this in China when we went there to shoot 'Mano Po' in 2002. We had last-minute shopping. I love the Ducati emblem on the back because I'm a biker fan.

"This Penshoppe shirt is memorable because I wore it in 'Kung Mawawala Ka,' both in the first and the last episodes. I think we got three other shirts identical to this. My stunt double in the show had to wear the same.

"This black polo is also special because I bought this in China. I also have this in white, but I can't find it right now. I like the fabric. It doesn't need ironing.

"My mom bought these khaki shirts in China at a really cheap price. I also wore them in 'Mano Po.'

"This is one of the shirts I wore in 'Deathrow.' I wore it in only one scene because they said I had to wear a real prison shirt like the other prisoners."

Jeans. "This is from Penshoppe also. I like its unique texture. If you look at it closely, it's striped. Also, I had always wanted a pair of jeans that's light-colored like this. I found one in Penshoppe.

"I like loose jeans. I don't think the straight cut would look good on me. I have this Penshoppe pair I like so much that I still use it even when it's already torn at the knees. It got ripped because it's so old. I think this is almost 6 years old now."

Shorts. "This is the newest style of Penshoppe shorts. The first time I saw one, *kumuha agad ako*. It has drawstrings, but the strings are hidden. I first wore it when 'Lagot Ka' shot an episode in Dakkak. Can you see the holes? One time, while I was driving, I accidentally burned it with a cigarette. *Buhay pa rin.* I also have it in green.

"I discovered board shorts only recently. I used to go to the beach wearing basketball shorts. I have other board shorts but this sky-blue pair is my favorite because it's light colored."

Jackets. "This is very thick and warm so I really feel protected. I hardly use this in the Philippines, though. My mom bought it in the States.

"For *pang-porma*, I use this gray water-repellant type from Nike. It's lightweight, which is the total opposite of my other jacket. A fan gave this Nike to me. He lives in Japan, but he keeps flying back and forth. I'm grateful."

Suits. "Only two persons make my suits. Paul Cabral is one. The other is my dad's tailor whose name is Boy. I tell them I want suits with Chinese collar so I don't have to wear neckties. Also because they say my neck is long.

"Wearing barong Tagalog makes me feel uncomfortable. Don't ask me why. I first wore one to my uncle's wedding in Indianapolis a few years back."

Shoes. "Most of my favorites are in the car. But among the pairs in my bedroom, I like this black leather high-cut pair the most. I've worn it about a hundred times it's already falling apart. You won't believe this but this is a Nike-Kenneth Cole pair. I like its simplicity and the unique style of its aerosoles.

"My favorite running shoes are Merrell. I'm a size 11. *Gusto kong style 'yung pahaba*. I'm not into those typical basketball shoes na *takaw-mata*. I also like light-colored ones. I found a perfect pair in Merrell.

"The pair I'm wearing now is also an old favorite. I wear it when 'my Merrells are not around. I use this when I feel like wearing white. It's from K-Swiss. I think this is 5 years old.

"These Nike slip-ons have been with me for the longest time. It's a wonder they're still alive. This comes with a pair of aqua-socks. I brought this with me to Boracay trips thrice already."

Accessories. "I'm not really into necklaces. The one I'm wearing now is a costume in 'Joyride.' I don't take it off anymore."

"I got this Swatch watch as a birthday gift from GMA 7. I like the style. I still have to have it adjusted before I could use it, though."

Perfume. "I like Clinique Happy. I don't know why, maybe because *bagay sa pH ko*. I just like the smell. It's as if when I'm using it, I smell even better when I perspire."

Eyewear. "Killer Loop shades are the best. Mine are in the car, too. They have blue lenses and the frame is oblong-ish. I like them because the lenses can be changed."

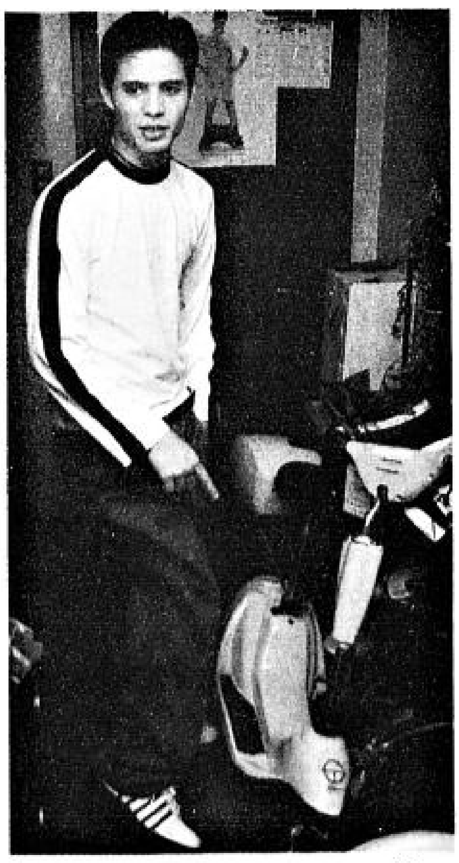
'PORMA' KID. He wears this gray water-repellant Nike jacket, a gift from a fan in Japan, when he wants to make "porma."

INNER SANCTUM. The brightly lit place is his busy-looking bathroom.

CIVIC DUTY. He checks the oil in the Honda Civic, one of several vehicles he shares with his mom.

'Every time my mom hears or reads something about what I supposedly did or didn't do, she makes sure to talk to me about it'

PHOTOGRAPHS AND MEMORIES. The photographs are from his childhood in Ayala Alabang where he grew up. He and his mom transferred to their Makati condo unit three years ago.



IT'S THE SHOES (5-year-old K-Swiss pair) he's showing off, not the yellow trolley.

SWATCH watch is a gift from GMA 7.

GUITAR MAN brings his musical instruments to tapings.

The Undead

REVIEW

By Constantino C. Tejero

THE AUDIENCE had been sufficiently forewarned: "Nightmares will rise from the heart and feed on your blood." In characteristically grim fashion, the prologue went on speaking about "pale shadows"...

What followed was a flickering version of "Nosferatu, A Symphony of Terror"—or the 84 minutes that remain of what studio executives hacked from F.W. Murnau's footage of the first vampire movie, which film historians have put back together.

It was the closing film of "Movies Live," Goethe Institut's offering of four masterpieces from the German silent cinema at SM Megamall last month. (This screening was accompanied by live scoring of a band of young progressive musicians appropriately called Garlic.)

Astonishingly, under threat of a supertyphoon, a horde of film enthusiasts braved rain and wind and jampacked the theater. These were mostly young folks probably curious about the legendary status of this 1922 film about a nocturnal creature.

In "250 Landmark Movies," culled by the Museum of the Moving Image of the British Film Institute, we are informed: This masterwork provided the reference point for every Dracula film that followed, including Herzog's majestic 1979 remake 'Nosferatu the Vampyre'."

This is the familiar story of love and vampirism based on Bram Stoker's Gothic novel. Because of copyright problems with the Stoker estate, however, the filmmakers had to make necessary changes: Count Dracula becomes Count Orlock, dubbed Nosferatu, or The Undead; Jonathan Harker is now Thomas Hutter, and so forth.

Troubled souls

The film has a lush formal beauty. Allusions to Romantic paintings and Gothic architecture abound.

Seen by many as anti-Semitic, or prophetic of the advent of Nazism, it was poorly received outside Europe. But because of the acclaim by the Surrealists, its reputation flourished.

We can imagine its appeal to the Surrealists, what with its "deliberately rich and nerve-shattering montage" of somnambulism, trance, madness, nightmare, possession, the unconscious. It could be a product as much as a portrait of unhinged mind, an archetype of the German mystical films of the 1920s.

This is a group of sinister, fantastic, macabre films which include Robert Wiene's "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari," Paul Wegener's "The Golem," Fritz Lang's "Destiny," Murnau's "Nosferatu" and "Faust—A German Folk Tale." They chiefly constitute what has come to be known as German Expressionism in cinema.

Thomas Elsaesser in "The Oxford History of World Cinema" has identified their characteristics as: "self-conscious stylization of décor, gesture and lighting; and preeminence of stylization, fantasy and nightmare visions as evidence of the inner torment and dilemmas in those for whom those films were made."

German Expressionism, which emerged in the Weimar years, might have been spawned by Romanticism and Gothic, though Lotte Eisner in "The Haunted Screen" and Siegfried Kracauer in "From Caligari to Hitler" would have seen these films as symptoms of troubled souls.

Unnatural world

Murnau's film mesmerizes with its trancelike rhythm and indelible images. It must have terrorized early audiences with its special effects (the tarpaulin removing itself, a ship hatch opening on its own, the huge black shadow of the vampire).

And there are what film historian Gerald Mast identifies as the deadly emanations of this man: rats, a wolf, the bare stony walls of the castle, the phantom carriage, the ghostly ship.

These primitive effects may have now become commonplace to the point of triteness, but they were radical at that time. The negative exposure of film, which marks the transition when Thomas Hutter crosses the bridge from the natural world to the world of the irrational, was quoted by Cocteau in "Orphée" and Godard in "Alphaville."

Says film essayist Janet Bergstrom: "Murnau created some of the most vivid images in German expressionist cinema. Nosferatu's shadow ascending the stairs towards the woman who awaits him evokes an entire era and genre of filmmaking... The unnatural penetrates the ordinary world, as when Nosferatu's ship glides into the harbor with its freight of coffins, rats, sailors' corpses and plague."

More hair-raising than the visual effects, something which hasn't dated, is the central performance of Max Schreck as the vile and hideous creature. (The name alone is a neck-twister.) Says Bergstrom: "Max Schreck as Nosferatu is a passive predator, the very icon of cinematic Expressionism..."

"NERVE-SHATTERING." Max Schreck as Nosferatu is one of the "indelible images" in the Murnau film.

Nocturnal tale

This film, though, is less expressionistic than others made at the time, and more naturalistic, particularly in its use of real locations to create atmosphere instead of the usual stylized studio sets. Count Orlock's castle, for instance, is a real 13th-century structure, the Oravasky Castle in Slovakia.

Despite this radical film realism, however, some elements fall short with today's jaded audiences.

Night scenes were technically impossible to film at that time, thus, making do with rudimentary technology, the filmmakers had to interchange day for night. As this is a nocturnal tale, many scenes naturally suffer in that respect.

The images are too sunshiny for a horror film. Chills mingled with giggles as our young audience watched the night creature carry his coffin through sun-drenched streets. In today's movie magic, that coffin would just have floated alongside him.

Its primitive special effects notwith-

THE UNDEAD/A36

'Home Alone' star jailed for drug possession

SHOW STOPPER

WASHINGTON—Actor Macaulay Culkin was jailed Friday on charges of possessing marijuana and a dangerous controlled substance without a prescription, police said.

Culkin, 24, was a passenger in a car that was pulled over for speeding Friday in Oklahoma, Capt. Jeffrey Becker of the Oklahoma City Police Department said in a statement.

Police were given permission to search the car by its driver and found marijuana and $3,000 dollars cash in a bag that the young actor said belonged to him.

Culkin was also carrying pills, later identified as Xanex and Clonzebam, in his pocket, and admitted that he did not have a prescription for them, the statement said.

"Culkin was transported to the Oklahoma County Jail and booked on the state charges of possession of a controlled dangerous substance without a prescription, possession of marijuana, and a municipal charge of possession of marijuana," it said.

Both the driver and Culkin, who posted bond and left jail a short time later, were described as cooperative during the incident.

Culkin was one of the highest paid child actors of all time when he starred in two "Home Alone" movies in 1990 and 1992 but has not recaptured his former fame in his acting career since then.

AFP

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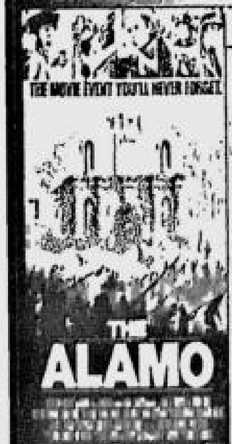
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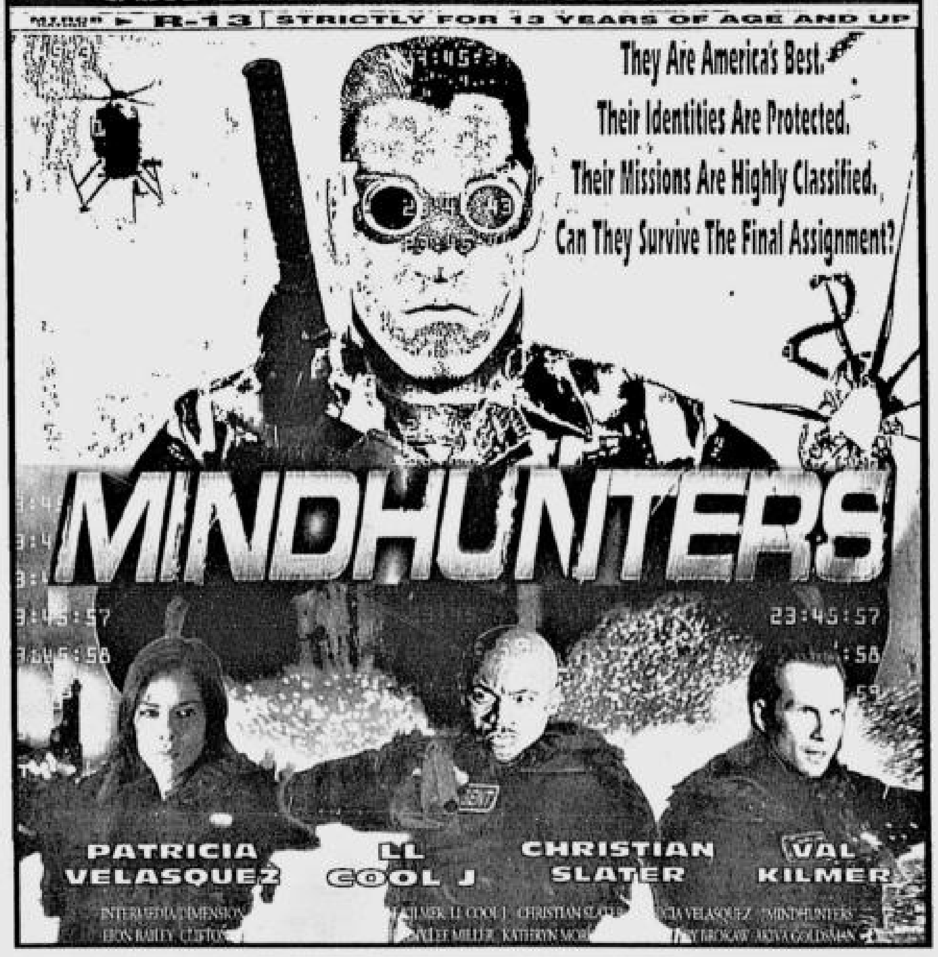
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The Undead

From page A35

standing, the film has a "creepily compulsive, unsettling atmosphere." With minimal use of camera tricks and special effects, horror is induced mainly by grim atmosphere and suggestion, something not quite captured even by Coppola in his high-tech "Bram Stoker's Dracula."

(Maybe because of what film critic Vincent Canby calls Coppola's "over-the-top frenzy and opulence... gorgeous sets and costumes, hallucinogenic special effects and mad montage," that film, although excellent, hasn't quite achieved the aura of horror and gloom that pervades Murnau's. So far, to us, only Elias Merhige's "Shadow of the Vampire" approaches it in mood and rhythm.)

Sometimes primitivism can be a plus, as it is precisely the black-and-white photography, the flickering light and shadows that make the scenes play like newsreel, adding to the effect of cinematic *verismo*.

Mystical

Bergstrom has rightly pointed out that this film derives its horror and sense of mystery from setting its sinister story in familiar surroundings among everyday people and events.

This stark contrast of the normal and the weird underscores what Mast says: "The existence of this creature in the world is a subversion of the natural order itself."

Here we understand the narrative in a way that's never clear in the other versions, including Coppola's, either because this one is a product of a purer cinema, or it's just Murnau's storytelling.

And the bloodsucking is all the more shocking and horrifying as it is presented in a more naturalistic vein. The victim does not die with one bite but weakens with the vampire's nightly feeding, until he or she is drained of life's juices. What we see then is more like the progression of a disease, or stages of an epidemic.

Says Mast: "The longer relationship of the vampire with each victim gives a feeling of mystical parasitism, of the way that death perpetually feeds off the living."

Through the years, we've been treated to a variety of interpretations of this woeful tale, from the Victorian novel's sublimation of the fear of unleashed female sexuality, to concealed allusions to homosexual desire or to Hitler, to Coppola's analogy of AIDS and vampirism.

Murnau just tells a story, plain and simple. Yet we feel it is with this version that we can believe such things can happen in our world. Because, unlike those films that followed, this one does not so much delve into the supernatural as portray "a man disconnected from the world on which he remains dependent."

Search for new action stars

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

THE AXN channel has come up with a novel kind of reality show, a search for The Next Action Star. Like "American Idol" and similar tilts before it, TNAS sent out a general audition call for buff and personable young men and women who thought they had it in them to be the next **Arnold Schwarzenegger** and **Angelina Jolie.**

As expected, thousands of hopefuls auditioned, but only a few passed muster. Some 16 of them made it to the finals, which put them through their paces in terms of acting and action routines.

Each week, one male and one female finalist is eliminated, until the two winners and certified new action stars remain. Their prize is nothing less than stardom in a new action movie intended to showcase their appeal, talent and action-adventure prowess.

We've been watching the show since its audition phase. The last time we viewed it, the finalists had been pared down to a baker's dozen. What do the surviving finalists have in common?

They are young, buff, agile, goodlooking, charismatic, daring, and ambitious like heck. Some of them look like they'll really do well as action leads, so if the selectors are objective and astute in their decisions, the search's successful conclusion appears to be assured.

On the other hand, the search process itself is occasionally unproductive, and even frustrating.

The first downer came early in the finals, when the contestants were made to do a rather graphic bed scene to see how they would register as sexy romantic leads.

This early focus on stripping and smooching threw off some of the finalists, and with good reason. Sure, action stars sometimes do daring love scenes, but to make such a big deal of it so early in the game threw the process off-kilter.

The situation further deteriorated when the edited scenes were screened. They were so perfunctory and banal that we wondered what the fuss over "thespic honesty and commitment" was all about.

Succeeding telecasts have confirmed the excessively demanding and stressful nature of the finalist phase of the search. Directors and talent scouts argued passionately over every trivial issues, and the finished scenes shown at the end of each episode betrayed the lack of substance and relevance of their "operatic" arguments.

The way they carried on, you would think they were looking for leads for a thespic and cinematic masterpiece, not an action flick.

Reality check, people, and don't overwhelm these hapless newcomers with your florid and intimidating exaggerations. It's only an action movie, after all.

'First Daughter'

IN FOREST Whitaker's new film, "First Daughter," **Katie Holmes** plays Samantha Mackenzie, whose father (**Michael Keaton**) just happens to be the President of the United States. As expected, when Samantha goes off to college, she yearns to live like other students, but isn't allowed to. The film deals with her trials and tribulations in a comedic and poignant way.

'Pepe en Pilar'

GANTIMPALA Theater Foundation presents its musical, "Pepe en Pilar," on Oct. 1-3 and Nov. 19-21 at St. Cecilia's Hall, St. Scholastica's College, and on Oct. 8-10 at the AFP Theater. Call 899-5745.

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Silver anniversary

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Feedback

FROM **Lorenzo S. Abacan** of Meycauayan, Bulacan: "It is evident that TV shows that search for the latest young stars in town have gained marked popularity among Pinoy viewers.

"Corollary to this, a growing number of parents encourage, support or even push their children to join those contests. Some winners readily decide to temporarily or permanently stop studying, to focus on performing on TV.

"I hope that these are not indications that entering show biz is slowly but surely replacing getting a college degree as the Filipino family's way of ensuring its children's bright future.

"That is why I can't help but ask at this point: 'Show biz *na nga ba ang bagong pag-asa ng pamilyang Pilipino*'?"

Star-studded month at Tavern

IT'S A star-studded September at the Tavern on the Square, which is also celebrating its anniversary this month.

Director Wyngard Tracy has whipped up a fun and fabulous entertainment menu for the month. Tavern's regular bands are Freestyle every Monday; Escape every Tuesday (except Sept. 21); Side A every Wednesday (except Sept. 22); Wise Guys every Thursday (except Sept. 23); Route 70 every Friday; and sensational new band Raymond Bagatsing and the Bandidoz every Saturday.

Freestyle tries the Wednesday slot on Sept. 22.

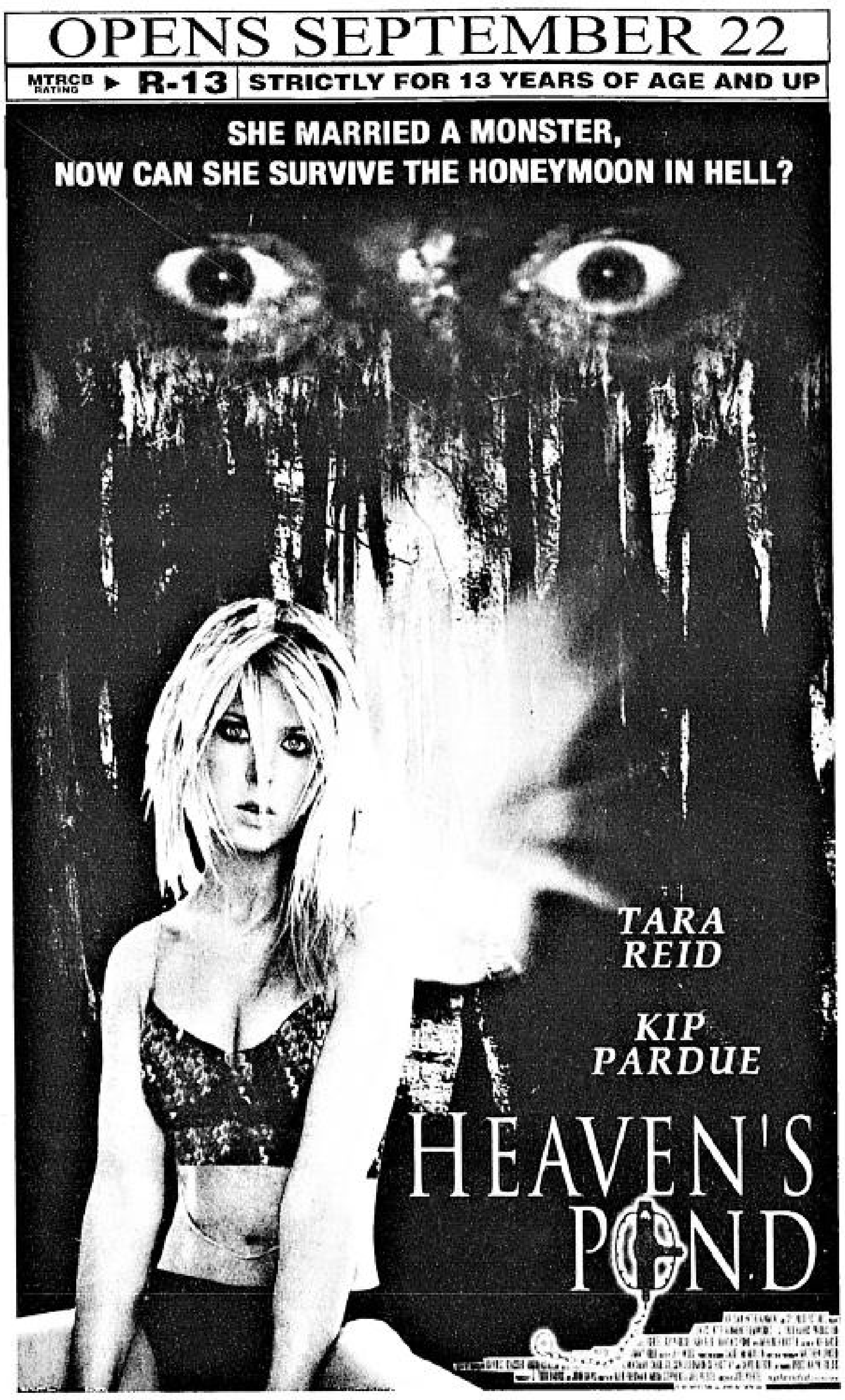
Tavern once again serves as the the launching pad of fresh musical talents like Raymond Bagatsing and the Bandidoz, led by the award-winning actor himself.

A poet of depth and range, Raymond will sing his own pop-rock compositions. "It's really eclectic," he describes his music. "I am basically a music guy who can appreciate anything and everything from The Police to John Mayer, from George Benson to Joey Ayala."

Other screen stars are also crossing over to Tavern. On Sept. 23, "Rated R" serves up hunky Troy Montero in concert. Singer-actress Rachel Alejandro graces the Tavern stage tomorrow night, Sept. 21.

Expect more star power and more surprises in the coming months. Tavern on the Square is on the second floor of Greenbelt 3 in Makati. It is open from Monday to Saturday starting at 6 p.m., with shows at 9:30 p.m.

For reservations and inquiries, call 757-4484 or 85.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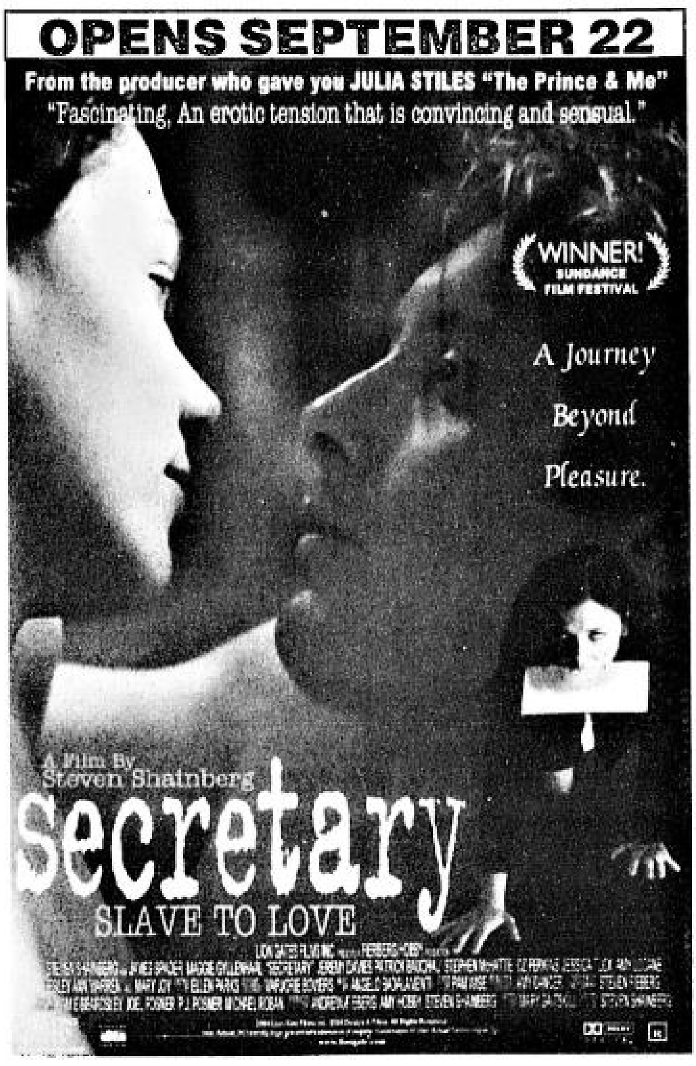
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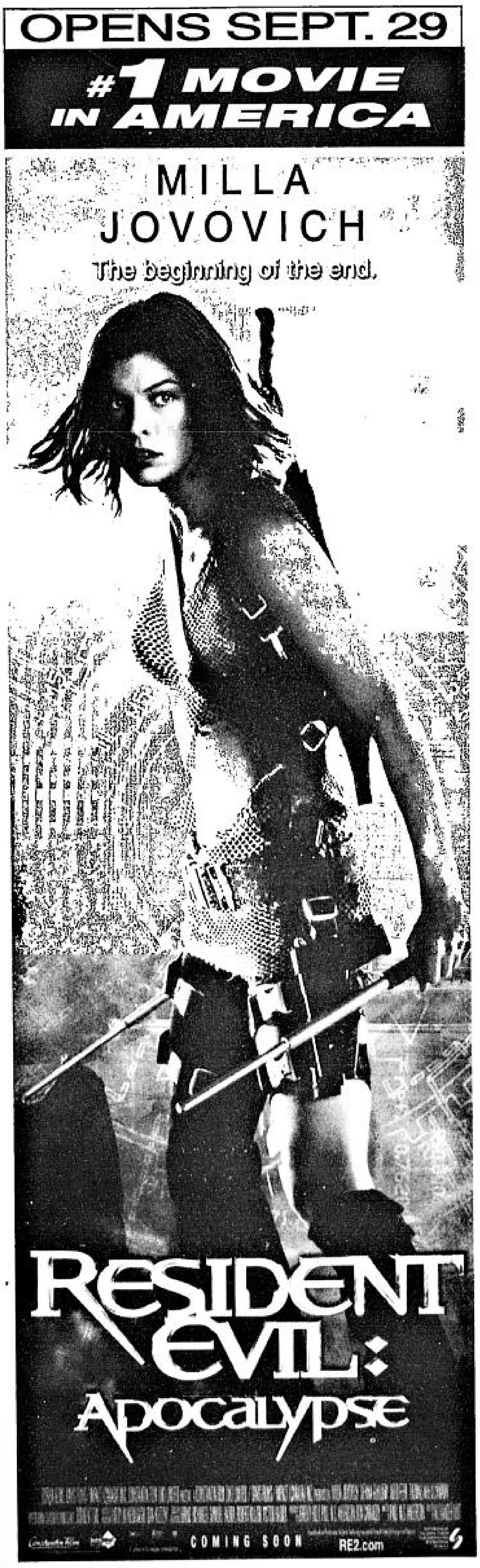
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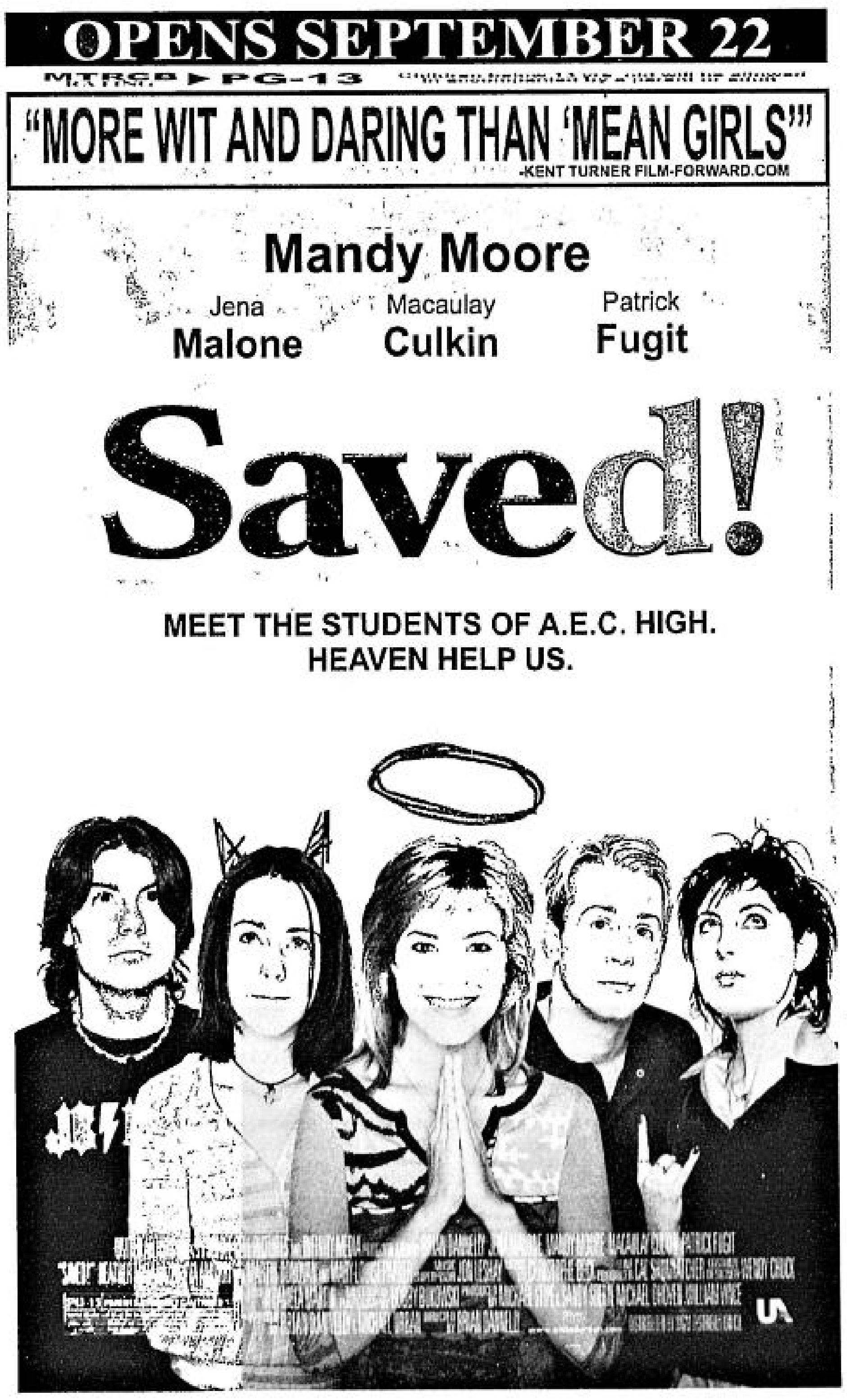
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3	THE TERMINAL	11:00, 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10:00
4	EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING	11:40, 2:15, 4:50, 7:25, 10:00
5	FENG SHUI	10:20, 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
6	MINDHUNTERS	10:20, 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
7	GODSEND	12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
8	ANACONDAS	12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
9	THE NOTEBOOK	11:00, 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10:00
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2	MINDHUNTERS	10:35, 12:50, 3:05, 5:20, 7:35, 9:50
3	13 GOING ON 30	1:30, 3:50, 6:10, 8:20, 10:00
4	ANACONDAS	10:40, 12:50, 3:00, 5:10, 7:20, 9:40
5	DODGEBALL	11:00, 1:05, 3:15, 5:25, 7:35, 9:45
6	FENG SHUI	10:10, 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 9:50
7	THE TERMINAL	10:45, 1:30, 4:15, 7:00, 9:45

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1	MINDHUNTERS	11:10, 1:40, 4:10, 6:40, 9:10
2	DODGEBALL	10:50, 12:50, 2:50, 4:50, 6:50, 9:00
3	THE TERMINAL	10:45, 1:15, 3:45, 6:15, 9:00
4	ANACONDAS	10:05, 12:05, 2:15, 4:25, 6:35, 9:00
5	THE NOTEBOOK	11:20, 1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 9:00
6	13 GOING ON 30	10:25, 12:50, 3:15, 5:40, 8:05, 10:30
7	EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING	11:20, 1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 8:40, 10:30
8	FENG SHUI	10:10, 12:40, 3:10, 5:40, 8:10, 10:30

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1 EXORCIST:THE BEGINNING
2 MINDHUNTERS
3 FENG SHUI
4 ANACONDAS
5 THE TERMINAL
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8 DODGEBALL

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2 FENG SHUI
3 DODGEBALL
4 ANACONDAS

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2 FENG SHUI
3 EXORCIST: THE BEGINNING
4 ANACONDAS

LIPA 757-3664 / 312-5870
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2 THE STEPFORD WIVES
3 THE PRINCESS DIARIES 2
4 FENG SHUI
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6 EXORCIST THE BEGINNING

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5 FENG SHUI
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THX 1 EXORCIST THE BEGINNING	1 13 GOING ON 30	1 13 GOING ON 30	5 THE TERMINAL	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 1 THE TERMINAL 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00, 11:30	1 EXORCIST THE BEGINNING
2 13 GOING ON 30	2 EXORCIST THE BEGINNING	2 MINDHUNTERS	6 FENG SHUI	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 2 EXORCIST THE BEGINNING 2:20, 4:45, 7:10, 9:35, 12:00	2 THE TERMINAL
3 FENG SHUI	3 THE TERMINAL	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 3 EXORCIST 10:55, 1:20, 3:45, 6:10, 8:35, 11:00	7 THE NOTEBOOK	GUARANTEED SEATS 3 FENG SHUI 1:10, 3:30, 5:50, 8:10, 10:30	3 FENG SHUI
4 MINDHUNTERS	4 FENG SHUI	4 DODGEBALL		GUARANTEED SEATS 4 THE NOTEBOOK 3:00, 5:45, 8:30, 11:15	4 SPARTAN
5 THE TERMINAL		GB1 GREENBELT 1		GUARANTEED SEATS 5 13 GOING ON 30 2:20, 4:35, [illegible]	5 PRINCESS DIARIES 2
		1 13 GOING ON 30 3:00, 5:15, 7:30, 9:45			
		2 FENG SHUI 12:20, 2:40, 5:00, 7:20, 9:40			

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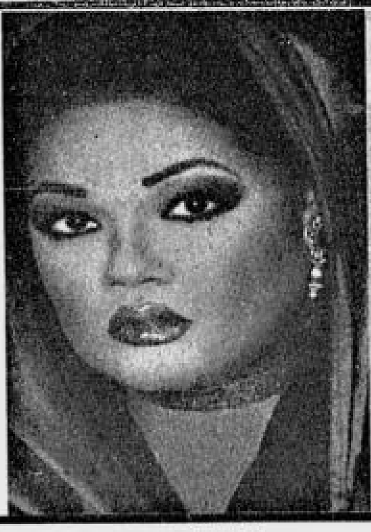

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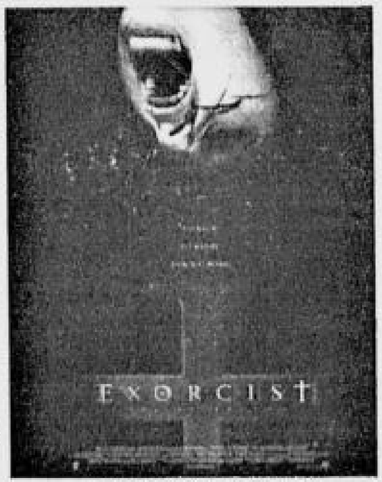

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Screen goddess Sophia is 70

ROME—Sophia Loren, the Italian screen goddess who is 70 on Monday, has generated a great deal of comment over the years.

Following is a selection of quotes by and about Sophia, culled from her official website (www.sophialoren.com):

By Sophia: "Sex appeal is 50 percent what you've got and 50 percent what people think you've got."

"The two big advantages I had at birth were to have been born wise and to have been born in poverty."

"It's a mistake to think that once you're done with school you need never learn anything new."

"Everything you see I owe to spaghetti."

"Getting ahead in a difficult profession requires avid faith in yourself. That is why some people with mediocre talent, but with great inner drive, go so much further than people with vastly superior talent."

"Mistakes are a part of the dues one pays for a full life."

"A woman's dress should be like a barbed-wire fence: serving its purpose without obstructing the view."

"Being beautiful can never hurt, but you have to have more. You have to sparkle, you have to be fun, you have to make your brain work if you have one."

About Sophia: "The more I was with Sophia, the more edible she looked."—actor Peter O'Toole

"She is so sensual that most men must have a mad desire to tear off her clothes. However, they do not even dare to take her hand because she looks so distinguished, natural and discreet."—late actor Cary Grant

"I didn't even say 'Hello.' I said, 'Miss Loren, you are the most beautiful woman I've ever seen.'" —actor Tom Hanks, on meeting Loren in 1999

"Sophia Loren's beauty is indisputable, but that's surely not the only reason for her popularity . . . a great actress who is also a wonderful woman, sweet and strong, rich in temperament, intelligent, witty, fun —qualities which, moreover, are reflected in her talent and in her performances. Sophia isn't loved because she is beautiful. She is loved because she's real." —Italian fashion designer Gianfranco Ferre

"I knew immediately she was someone remarkable. Something played off her that gave her a kind of illumination." —husband Carlo Ponti

"I never saw so much woman coming at me at one time."—actor William Holden

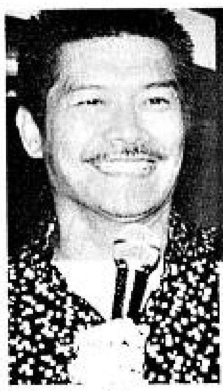
"She is the essence of Italian cinema—absolutely human." —husband Carlo Ponti *AFP*

RONI T. Merk (left) and Annie Ringor

KAPAMILYA & KAPUSO. GMA Network OIC for Corporate Affairs Butch Raquel and ABS-CBN VP Maloli Manalastas together, with the latter's daughters, Chelly and Katz

SING & RING. Isay Alvarez, Dulce, PLDT's Butch Jimenez and wife Tricia Amper

Artists turn out 'for a special friend'



MON David

ERIK Santos

LEO Valdez

OGIE Alcasid

AUDIE Gemora

KING

From page A40

when will I ever hear The Engineer from "Miss Saigon" Leo Valdez and first diva Dulce sing Andrea Bocelli and Celine Dion's "The Prayer" again?

I didn't think the common movie reviewer's admonition would apply, but really, take a lengthy restroom break during this show and you would have risked missing something significant.

Earlier this year, a visit to a doctor for chest pains and a dry cough turned into a nightmare for Louie when it was revealed that he was stricken with lung cancer. He has since been undergoing intensive chemotherapy, fighting to turn his condition around. His friends in the music industry, artists whose talents are just as huge as their hearts, wanted not only to help him with the staggering cost of his cancer treatments, but also to use their music to show him he's not in this fight alone. They were led by Richard Merk and RJ Jacinto.

"From hereon every song we will sing is going to be for you, Louie," said a high-spirited Martin before dedicating his immensely popular "You Are My Song" to the writer-editor.

Martin and Gary

Martin was in the US last month to topbill two concerts with Patti Austin at the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles, California and the Rosemont Theater in Rosemont, Illinois, but he came back in time to join the Merk's show.

He showed how he recently won Las Vegas audiences during a two-month stint in the city dubbed as "the live entertainment capital of the world," with his fresh interpretation of a Frank Sinatra standard, "The Way You Look Tonight," playing with the lyrics a little to mention Louie's penchant for dressing in all-white.

Gary V, who came with his wife Angeli Pangilinan, accompanied himself on the keyboards and sang the most heartbreaking version of "Sana Maulit Muli" I've ever heard. He also sang Cecile Azarcon's awe-inspiring "Warrior is a Child" as well as his latest hit single, "How Did You Know" the theme song of the Star Cinema blockbuster, "All My Life."

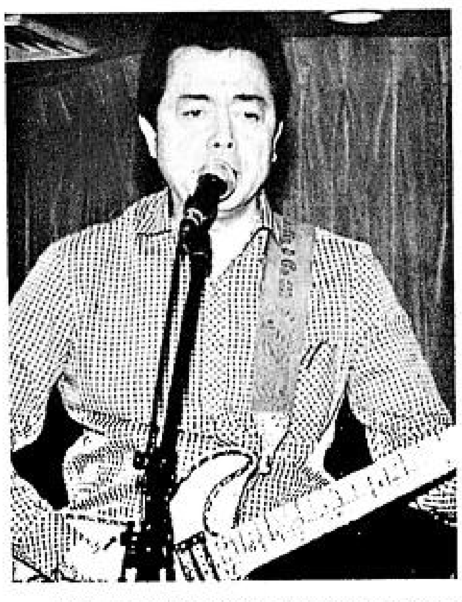
The crowd didn't even need to plead for an encore as Gary himself asked if he could sing some more. He called on his "idol" and *kumpare* Richard Merk to share the stage with him so they could do Al Jarreau's lyrical melding of the Chick Correa classic, "Spain," a dream duet which Gary said he sought since he first heard Richard sing the jazz song at the Mandarin Oriental Bar long ago. Lively, improvisational and athletic, Gary and Richard's "Spain" was a hair-raising ride that I reckon would have even the habitués of the Blue Note in New York roaring in delight.

NOEL Trinidad and Robert Seña

AI AI de las Alas

ONCOLOGIST Tommy Reyes

ABE and Nini Licaros



FRIENDS AND PERFORMERS Martin and Gary V with Angeli V and Richard M (above). Richard and RJ Jacinto (left) led in putting the show together
PHOTOS BY MANDY NAVASERO

Pure rock

This was indeed a celebration, and somewhere in the midst of it I thought, this is not a show you review but swim in. The music had started shortly after 8 p.m. with RJ and Friends leading off the performances, and the bandwagon seemed unstoppable.

RJ, who shared hosting duties with Richard Merk—they organized the show together with ABS-CBN's Leah Salterio and other friends—would have made a good professor in Jack Black's School of Rock. RJ and his band treated the audience to a short crash course in the early history of "pure, unadulterated rock and roll," highlighted by a medley of The Beatles' best.

Nyoy Volante took the stage next with fizzing solos of Stevie Wonder classics, "Knocks Me Off My Feet" and "Lately," and just like the great Wonder, Nyoy could also be considered the vocalist "likely to make you smile against your will." The ladies screamed for one more song and he obliged, using his guitar with impatient audacity (ooh those string scrapings, man!) to deliver an outstanding rendition of The Apo Hiking Society's "Panalangin."

The Forte Band, featuring sisters Pat and Lenny Castillo, further fed the buzz, singing Samanta Sang's "Emotion" and Marvin Gaye's "Ain't No Mountain High Enough." They could have extended their stint to an entire "greatest hits of the '70s" set and the people would not have minded, but Pat saw the night's other performers already crowding at the bar so she and the band prudently made their exit.

Richard Merk came on next and crooned another Sinatra standard, "Fly Me to the Moon" with pianist par excellence Romy Posadas accompanying.

King and champ

Representing the freshmen class of the industry were Star Record's King and Star in a Million champ Erik Santos. King sang his remake of the Neocolors favorite, "Maybe" and "Bakit 'Di Mo Pagbigyan," the carrier single of his solo album "The Reason I Exist." Erik belted out Keith Martin's "Because of You" and Luther Vandross' "I'd Rather."

It was clearly a seniors' night though, with Jacqui Magno and Mon David singing more standards and reminding everyone how inarticulate so much modern music sounds by contrast. Jacqui gave a wonderful sparkle to the Oscar-winning song "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" from the 1939 Oscar best picture "The Wizard of Oz"; and Mon did the same for the quintessential movie love song, "As Time Goes By," which happens to belong to another Oscar winner, "Casablanca."

After the memorable songs from the silver screen came the memorable songs from musical theater. Trumpets Playshop founder and guiding force Audie Gemora came out from his self-imposed retirement from the stage to sing "Some Enchanted Evening" from "South Pacific." (Audie, un-retire yourself, please.)

From Andrew Lloyd Webber's "Cats" Dulce sang Grizabella's soliloquy "Memory," the song that earned her the top prize in the 1985 Asia Pacific Singing Contest.

And a new poetry of praise should be written for Leo Valdez who brought goose bumps all over with his renditions of Jean Valjean's "Bring Him Home" from "Les Miserables" (the editor's personal request) and "This is the Moment" from "Jekyll & Hyde."

Art form

Even the most overbooked artists showed up. Ai-Ai (she doesn't need her last name anymore), proved yet again why comedy should be considered one of the highest art forms—and one of the highest paid art forms—and that she's worth every peso producers pay her, as she turned the concert into a veritable laugh fest if only for a few minutes.

Ogie Alcasid, perhaps the most consummate and the most prolific artist in the industry today, had the whole audience moving and grooving with his take on Hotdog's "Bongga Ka 'Day." Of course, they would not have let go of Ogie until he sang a medley of his most requested songs, "Nandito Ako", "Bakit Ngayon Ka Lang" and "Kailangan Kita," also accompanying himself on the piano.

There were so many talented artists Thursday night that when veteran performer Noel Trinidad took the stage he told the crowd in typical self-effacing humor that he found it "almost masochistic to sing after all these great singers." Noel, though, gamely held his own, and even had the crowd clamoring for more. (He candidly told them off, "*Tama na, hirap na hirap na nga sa isa e.*"

It was past 1 a.m. when RJ and Friends got on the stage again to finish what they started. I thought I should be getting home. But theater couple Isay Alvarez and Robert Seña came on board and started jamming with the band. They sang The Hues Corporation's "Rock the Boat," then The Four Tops' "I Can't Help Myself."

I looked at my watch again and sat right back down. I mean, c'mon, we're talking about Miss Saigon's original West End cast members doing rock and roll. Give me another beer.

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ENTERTAINMENT

Artists turn out 'for a special friend'

By Ruben M. Cruz Jr.
Contributor

SHOW STOPPER

SOME shows you just never forget.

Entertainment artists showed their true colors Thursday night by coming together to benefit "a very special friend," who happened to be entertainment editor Louie Camino. The benefit show, also called "For a Very Special Friend," was held at Merk's Bar Bistro at Greenbelt 3 Makati, and was also part of INQUIRER for a Cause. It was a big gathering of performers rarely seen in a lounge since the glory days of Birdland in the '80s.

Thursday night, there was rock and roll, there was Broadway and West End, there was jazz, there was Motown, there were songs from the Great American Songbook, and there were songs from the Great Filipino Songbook. There was even a bit of magic. And I don't mean metaphorical magic but the David Blaine kind, courtesy of Fil-Canadian magician Erik Mana.

Big talents, big hearts

"You'd be hard-pressed to get these talents in any one place again," I overheard a woman tell her friend after the show. "It won't happen again. Not like this."

I took a look at my notebook where I jotted down the list of performers in what turned out to be a 20-act, five-hour extravaganza and I couldn't agree with the lady more. I mean, when was the last time I saw Martin Nievera and Gary Valenciano perform in the same venue? And

ARTISTS/ A39

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CINEMA 1 13 GOING ON 30 11:00, 1:15, 3:30, 5:45, 8:00, 10:15 PG13	CINEMA 2 EXORCIST 11:00, 1:10, 3:25, 5:40, 7:55, 10:10 R13

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FENG SHUI PG13 12:50,3:10,5:30,7:50,10:10	THE NOTEBOOK PG13 12:40,3:20,6:00,8:40	DODGEBALL PG13 11:50,1:50,3:50

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① 13 GOING ON 30
FS : 12:10PM, 2:25PM, 4:40PM, 6:55PM
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MTRCB Rating : (PG-13)

② FENG SHUI
FS : 12:20PM, 2:45PM, 5:10PM, 7:35PM
LMF: 10:00PM
MTRCB Rating : (PG-13)

③ THE TERMINAL
FS : 11:40AM, 2.15PM, 4:50PM,7:25PM
LMF: 10:00 PM
MTRCB Rating : (GP)

④ EXORCIST : The Beginning
MTRCB Rating : (R-13)

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Claudia Puig, USA TODAY
jennifer garner
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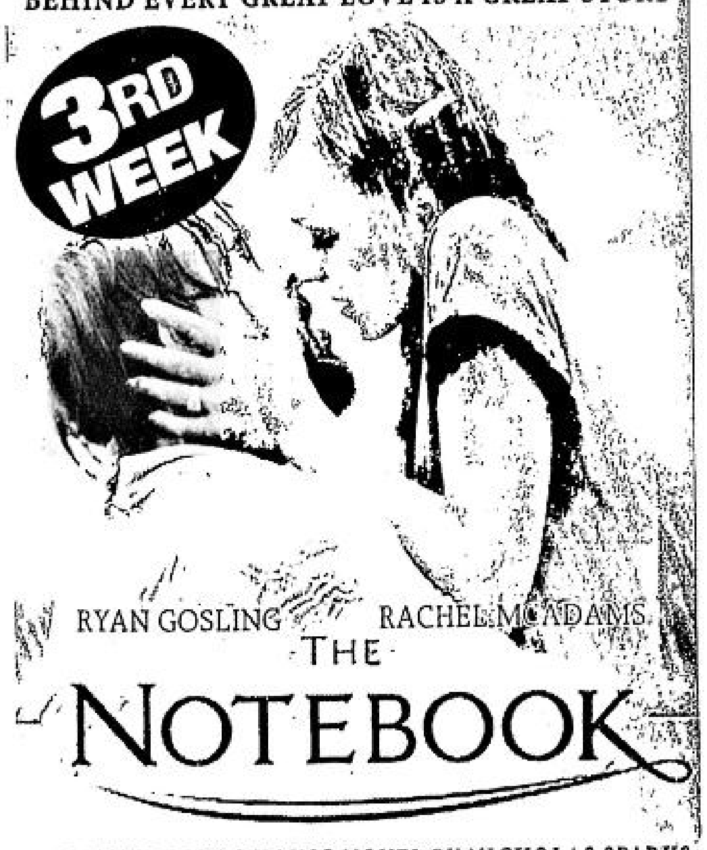

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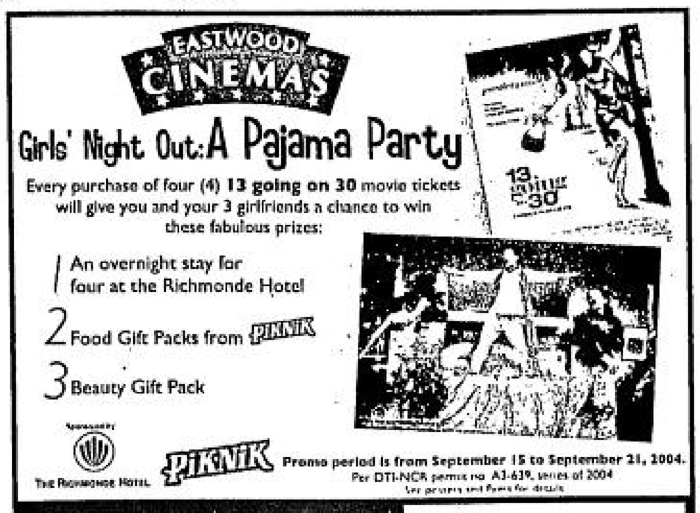

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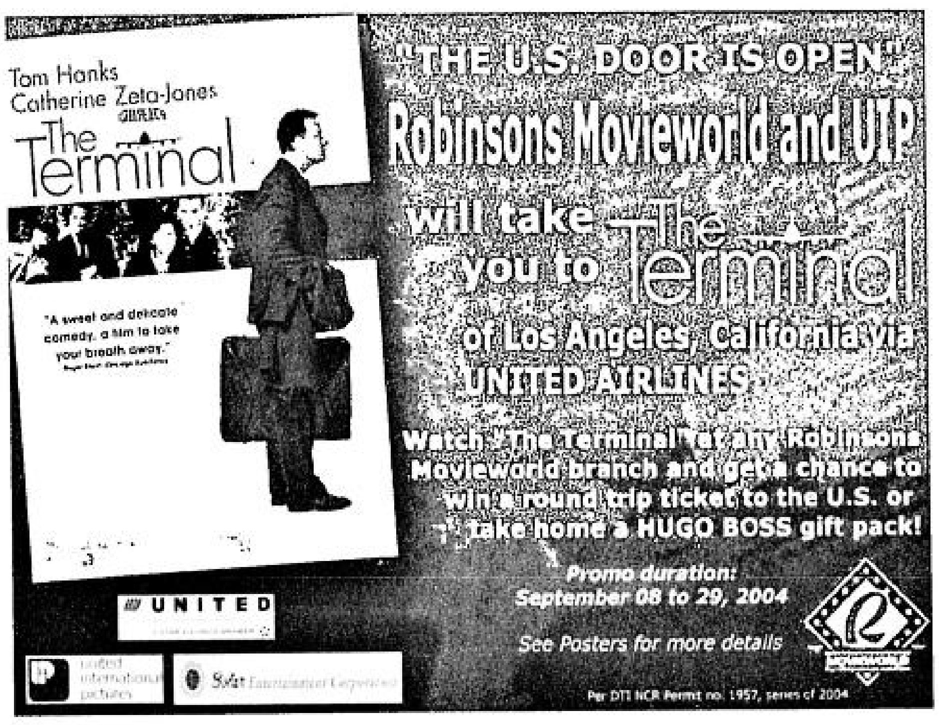
PG-13

2 THE EXORCIST
11:45, 2:20, 4:55, 7:30, 10:20
R-13

3 THE TERMINAL
11:00, 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10:20
GP

4 FENG SHUI
10:30, 1:20, 4:10, 7:00, 10:20
PG-13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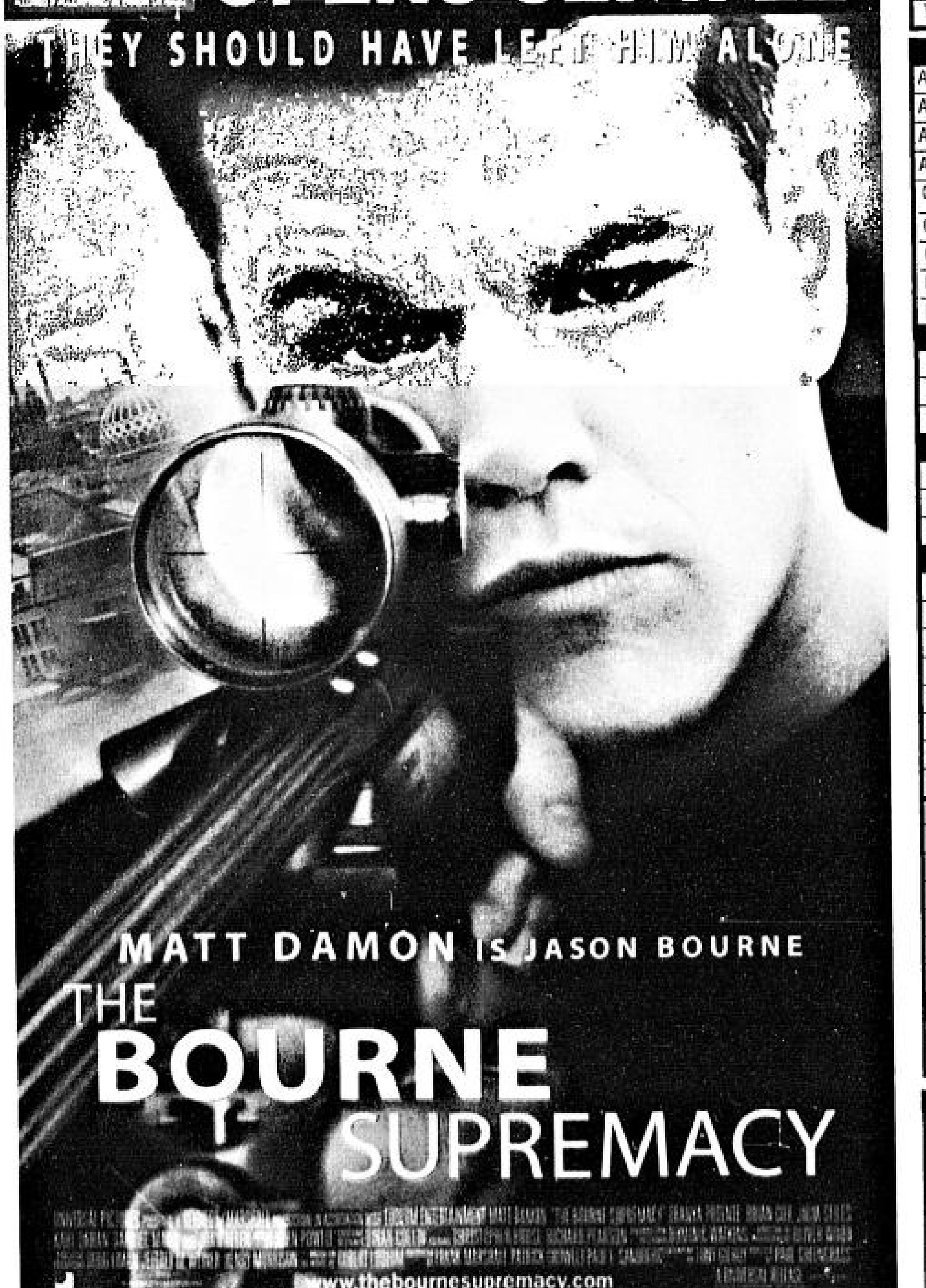
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3	Dolby	FENG SHUI 11:35 am 1:55 pm 4:15 pm 6:35 pm 8:55 pm
4	SDDS	EXORCIST 12:10 pm 2:25 pm 4:40 pm 6:55 pm 9:10 pm
5	dts	ANACONDAS 11:35 am 1:55 pm 4:15 pm 6:35 pm 8:55 pm
6	Dolby	THE TERMINAL 12:35 pm 3:20 pm 6:05 pm 8:50 pm
7	Dolby	MIND HUNTERS 12:45 pm 3:15 pm 5:45 pm 8:15 pm

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Sep 30	UAAP CHAMPIONSHIP FINALS
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THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

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EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	SEX BOMB / RAMPADORA
ODEON	X-MEN 2
ODEON-2	BUKID AY BASA / KASIBULAN
ROBEN	BOLD STAR
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	SPY / LEGEND OF CROCODILE
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	BIKTIMA / NAIIBANG HAYOP
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	BERTUD NG PUTIK
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	FENG SHUI
B	CLOSED
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA 1,2,3&4	THE NOTEBOOK/THE TERMINAL/PRINCESS DIARIES 2/DODGEBALL
PREMIERE THEATRE	ANACONDAS
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	DODGEBALL
CINEMA-2	TAG-INIT
CINEMA-3	FENG SHUI
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	EXORCIST THE BEGINNING
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	ALIEN VS PREDATOR
CINEMA-6	THE NOTEBOOK
CINEMA-7	GODSEND
CINEMA-8	NENA INOSENTE (RE-ISSUE)
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	EXORCIST THE BEGINNING
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	ANACONDAS
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	13 GOING ON 30
CINEMA-12	MINDHUNTERS
CINEMA-14	THE TERMINAL
CINEMA-15	FENG SHUI
LORES	
CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN	
(LAS PINAS)	ALIEN VS PREDATOR
CINEMA-1	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
CINEMA-2	GARFIELD
CINEMA-4	[illegible]
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARANAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

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B1

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RP risks new credit-rating downgrade

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas has warned that the country risks another credit-rating downgrade if the government fails to implement any of its proposed revenue-enhancement measures this year, saying the international capital market was closely watching how the Philippines will weather its fiscal woes.

"We cannot underestimate the concern of investors on the government's need to implement its fiscal reform measures. We could be courting a downgrade if nothing happens within the year," said Cora Guidote, executive director of the BSP's Investor Relations Office.

Guidote said foreign investors were expected to raise questions on the progress of the Arroyo administration's proposed fiscal measures, and on their chances of getting legislated by Congress, when they meet with the country's economic officials for a two-week roadshow that will start on Wednesday.

The roadshow, which will be led by the Department of Finance, will be participated in by Finance Secretary Juanita Amatong, BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura, BSP Deputy Governor Amando Tetangco Jr., and Trade and Industry Secretary Cesar Purisima. The economic officials will brief representatives from credit-rating agencies, bond investors and foreign direct investors on the state of the Philippine economy, especially the health of the fiscal sector.

The roadshow, whose objective is to win confidence of the international capital market in the Philippines amid talks of the country's fiscal problems, will begin in Hong Kong and continue to Singapore, London, New York, and end in Washington.

Guidote said Congress needed to pass at least one revenue measure this year to prove to the international credit and investment community that the country was capable of averting a looming fiscal crisis.

Since the cash-strapped government is expected to shoulder bigger expenditures in the coming years, especially because of its intention to absorb the P500 billion worth of debts of state-owned National Power Corp., investors would naturally watch whether it could come up with new revenue sources, Guidote explained.

The Arroyo administration is pushing for the legislation of eight revenue-enhancement measures. These are the rationalization of fiscal incentives, the indexation to inflation of excise taxes on cigarettes and alcohol, a two-step increase in the value-added tax, a P2 increase in the excise tax on petroleum, the shift from net to gross income tax, a tax amnesty, the implementation of a performance-based attrition system for government agencies, and the imposition of a franchise tax on telecommunication companies.

If all these measures are passed, the government expects to generate a combined P80 billion in additional revenues a year. These are intended to help achieve the national government's medium-term target of wiping out its budget deficit, which stood at P199.9 billion last year, and to gradually reduce its ballooning debt, which has already reached more than P3 trillion.

Guidote said that if Congress failed to pass at least one revenue-enhancement measure before the end of the year, the country could have its credit ratings downgraded by a notch.

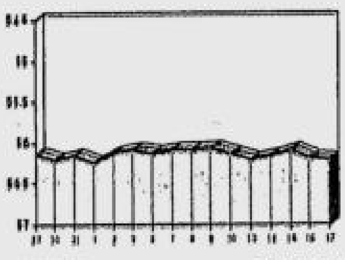
The country's current credit ratings from Standard & Poor's and Fitch Ratings both stand at BB (stable outlook), while the credit

RP RISKS/ B9

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

PESO-DOLLAR RATE



P 56.21 = $1
As of 5 p.m., Sept. 17, 2004

¥ 109.74 = $1
As of 5 p.m., Sept. 17, 2004

GOLD: $403.90-404.40
per ounce Hong Kong, Sept. 16, 2004

United States	Dollar	0.819941	1.000000	56.1680
Japan	Yen	0.007487	0.009131	0.5129
United Kingdom	Pound	1.471138	1.794200	100.7766
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.105135	0.128223	7.2020
Switzerland	Franc	0.646794	0.788830	44.3070
Canada	Dollar	0.635712	0.775314	43.5478
Singapore	Dollar	0.485690	0.592347	33.2709
Australia	Dollar	0.571826	0.697399	39.1715
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.174967	2.652590	148.9907
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.218651	0.266667	14.9782
Brunei	Dollar	0.484255	0.590598	33.1727
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000091	0.000111	0.0062
Thailand	Baht	0.019897	0.024266	1.3630
UAE	Dirham	0.223240	0.272264	15.2925
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.219600	68.5025
Argentina	Peso	0.275610	0.336134	18.8800
Brazil	Real	0.283815	0.346141	19.4420
Denmark	Kroner	0.134415	0.163932	9.2077
India	Rupee	0.017918	0.021853	1.2274
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.215803	0.263193	14.7830
Mexico	New Peso	0.071312	0.086972	4.8850
New Zealand	Dollar	0.540502	0.659196	37.0257
Norway	Kroner	0.118516	0.144542	8.1186
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013950	0.017013	0.9556
South Africa	Rand	0.125467	0.153020	8.5948
Korea	Won	0.000716	0.000873	0.0490
Sweden	Kroner	0.109661	0.133743	7.5121
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024381	0.029735	1.6702

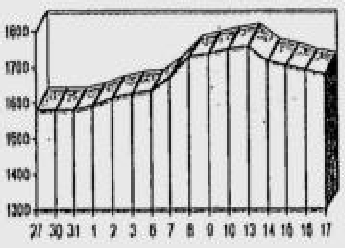
STOCK MARKET

Profit-taking seen to continue

STOCKS are expected to continue reeling from profit-taking as market players cash in the big gains made in the major run-up two weeks ago, traders said.

"It's still a consolidation, probably to 1,700. It could go as low as 1,650. After the run-up, foreigners have started to sell," said Joey Roxas, presi-

PROFIT-TAKING/ B6



(See stock market report on Page B6)

PAL aims for 99% on-time performance

By Clarissa S. Batino

NO more "Plane-Always-Late" tag for flag carrier Philippine Airlines.

PAL president Jaime Bautista said the airline would like to initially improve its on-time performance to 90 percent for overseas flights and 95 percent for domestic runs starting this year.

Eventually, the airline controlled by taipan Lucio Tan would like to hit a 99-percent on-time performance.

The flag carrier's current on-time performance is slightly below the standard of 85 percent on overseas flights and 90 percent on local flights. Bautista admitted that PAL had been rating poorly in this area compared to its closest rival, Cebu Air Pacific.

Gokongwei-owned Cebu Pacific claims to have an on-time performance of 99 percent.

"Our on-time performance is very close to the airline standard of 85 percent for international and 90 percent for domestic. We acknowledge that we should achieve more than this to further meet the expectations of our passengers," Bautista pointed out.

In a bid to help solve the problem, PAL had started reducing the turnaround time in the provinces from one hour to between 30 and 45 minutes so the planes could come back earlier to Manila for the service checks and maintenance.

PAL is also reviewing flight schedules to improve the use of its planes. The PAL chief said the company wanted to use each aircraft for more than seven hours a day.

"If we do this, there is a better chance to generate more revenue," he said.

Bautista said that

PAL/ B4

the quick brown fox

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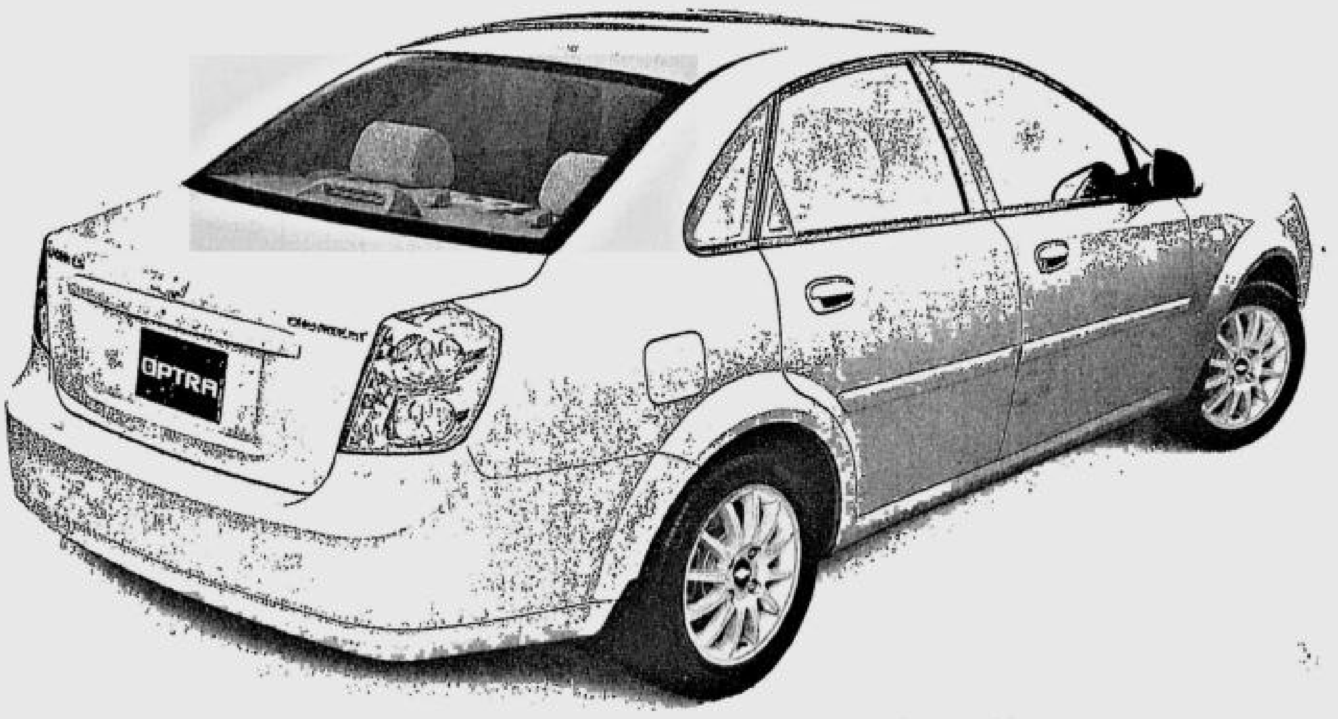

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15%	100,500	49,067	33,601	26,672	19,159	15,412	13,208
20%	134,000	46,078	31,553	25,047	17,992	14,473	12,403
25%	167,500	43,089	20,505	23,423	16,825	13,535	11,599
30%	201,000	40,100	27,457	21,799	15,658	12,597	10,793
35%	234,500	37,108	25,409	20,175	14,491	11,658	9,988
40%	268,000	34,116	23,361	18,549	13,325	10,719	9,184
45%	301,500	31,126	21,314	16,925	12,158	9,781	8,378
50%	335,000	27,916	19,266	15,301	10,992	8,842	7,574

Chevrolet Optra 1.6 LS A/T

SRP	P710,000	MONTHS TO PAY					
%DP	DP	12	18	24	36	48	60
15%	106,500	52,102	35,677	28,319	20,343	16,365	14,025
20%	142,000	48,933	33,509	26,599	19,107	15,370	13,172
25%	177,500	45,768	31,338	24,877	17,870	14,375	12,319
30%	213,000	42,597	29,168	23,156	16,634	13,381	11,466
35%	248,500	39,427	26,998	21,435	15,397	12,386	10,613
40%	284,000	36,260	24,829	19,713	14,161	11,391	9,760
45%	319,500	33,092	22,658	17,992	12,924	10,397	8,907
50%	355,000	29,583	20,490	16,271	11,688	9,402	8,054

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Beating the odds in Mindanao

MINDANAWORLD

Joji Ilagan-Bian

AFTER six long years, Davao City once again hosted the 13th Mindanao Business Conference. An investment haven where business and leisure blend, Davao City boasted its local flavor to politicians, businessmen, traders, entrepreneurs, foreign dignitaries, industrialists and Mindanao movers.

With the theme, "Effective Governance for Economic Progress," this year's conference focused on the paramount importance of good public governance as one of the indispensable factors that could lead to the economic turnaround of the island of Mindanao.

A significant issue raised in the agenda was the need for effective delivery of financing programs to micro and small businesses, reduction of shipping costs, and the revitalization of the mining industry. Interestingly, the first point of the action agenda is the shift to a federal form of government, which many believe will result in a "richer and better" Mindanao.

Action Agenda

This Action Agenda was presented to President Macapagal-Arroyo on the second day of the conference. Ms Arroyo received the platform with enthusiasm and promptly tasked a Mindanaoan Cabinet member, DTI Sec. Cesar Purisima, to coordinate its implementation.

President Arroyo's speech centered on the looming financial crisis in the country. She outlined her legacy for national stability in her 10-point agenda and used the acronym BEAT THE ODDS. That's a good memory aid, don't you think so?

B is for balanced budget; E for education for all; A for automated elections; T for transport and digital infrastructure to connect the entire country; T is for the termination of the MILF and NPA conflicts; H for heal the wounds of Edsa; E for electricity and water for the entire country. The O in the word ODDS is for job opportunities for 10 million; D for decongestion of Metro Manila by developing new centers for government, business and housing in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao; and DS for the development of Subic and Clark.

A government center in Mindanao, which the President cited, is the Department of Agriculture, since majority of the food in the country is produced in Mindanao. In the next few years, we will see our region bustling with business opportunities and government projects.

According to Ms Arroyo, "hope is there, but it must be fueled by the fullest commitment to sacrifice."

To further develop Mindanao and the rest of the Philippines requires sacrifice and effective revenue enhancing activities. Our external debt-to-GDP stands at 71.44%, the third highest in Asia, while our revenue-to-GDP ratio, is at 14.1%, the second lowest. The Bureau of Internal Revenue's collection-to-GDP ratio for 2004 was only a meager 10.2%.

Harsh figures

These harsh figures prompted the President to renew her call to all the sectors to unite during such crucial moments. She was very firm in presenting and dealing with these realities, which she would rather face today than deal with later. Indeed, that was an encounter with the truth because, as Ms Arroyo said herself, she wanted to be an honest President. Such candor is admirable. It also posed a challenge to the Mindanao private sector.

We are faced with the reality that we need to bridge the gap to finance our country's growth requirements. Everyone must do his or her share in rooting out the waste by improving tax collection efficiency and weeding out corruption. Pay taxes and help uplift the country.

So much hope

The President also met the Muslim women leaders where she articulated her commitment to this active group of women.

In my many years of networking for Mindanao's development; I had noticed (and many men had commented on this also) the strong participation of Mindanao women in all phases of governance. With both men and women of Mindanao working hand in hand, I see a Mindanao moving beyond expectations.

There is so much hope in the hearts of our people right now because we see many forces also wanting to help us sustain peace and progress.

Her Excellency Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo opted not to individually address all the points of our Mindanao Action Agenda. But the platform complements her BEAT THE ODDS battlecry, and she has shown to us that she is bent on forging a better, brighter and bigger future for our island.

(Joji Ilagan-Bian is a strong advocate for Mindanao; she is vice chair of the Mindanao Commission Of Women and National Corn Board; chair of the Mindanao TVET; member of the Export Development Council, and former chair of the Mindanao Business Council. Email comments to jojibian2@yahoo.com.)

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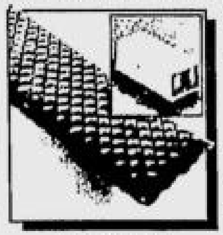

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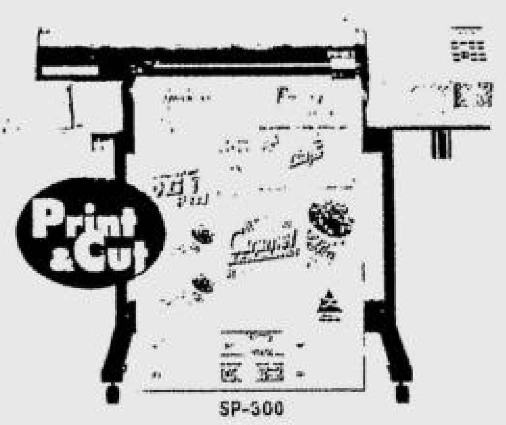

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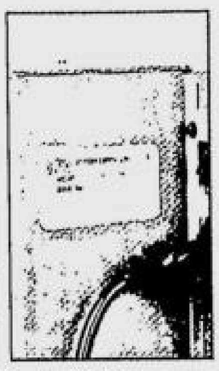

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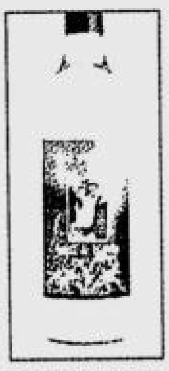

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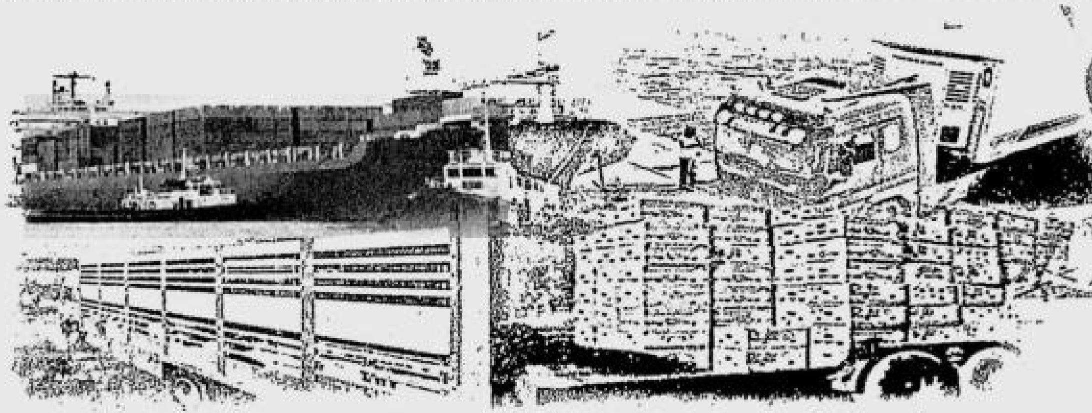

Transport: A key link for Agriculture and Food

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FOOD LINK 2004
5th International Food Processing/ Packaging and Food Products Exhibition

October 14-16, 2004
World Trade Center
Metro Manila (WTCMM)

SEMINARS (as of September 16, 2004)

Time	Seminar
October 14, 2004	
1:00 - 3:00 pm	The Fourth Generation of Mycotoxin Binders / Phytogenic Solutions for High Performance Farming by. Agrimate, Inc. *(Venue. Seminar Room 1)*
3:30 - 5:30	The Relationship Between Environmental Control and Viral Disease Outbreak *by: Mingley Trades (Venue: Seminar Room 1)* Control of Piglet Scours / Gamefowl Management and Conditioning *by. Univet Agricultural Products (Venue: Seminar Room 2)*
October 15, 2004	
10:30 - 12:30 pm	Salmonela Control in Farm and Feemill *by. Diconex (Phils.), Inc. (Venue. Seminar Room 1)*
10:30 - 3.00	Knowing French Technologies in Agriculture and Services *by: Mission Economique Manila* Slaughtering, Dressing and Feeding Equipment for the Poultry Industry *by. Bayle and PAL* 'WINE MAKING: A Tradition in France *by: Le Cellier and Fiee des Lois* Preparation and Transformation of SASSO Chicken *by: Pamora Farm* Growing SASSO Chicken in the Philippines *by: SASSO* Duck Industry in France and What Can Be Done in the Philippines Using Quality Breeds *by: Sepalm* Hog Industry: The French Expertise in Genetics; Acclimatization and Optimization of the Inseminations in Gilts and Sows *by: France Hybrides* New Trends for Grinding and Conditioning in the Aquatic Feeds Plants *by: Stolz Sequipag (Venue: Seminar Room 2)*
1:00 - 3:00	Using Organic Selenium and Fermented Yeast Culture in Swine and Poultry Diet *by: Philchema, Inc. (Venue: Seminar Room 1)*
3:30 - 5:30	Use of Poultry Byproduct Meal in Pig Starters / Use of Poultry Byproduct Meal in Aquafeeds *by: National Renderers Association - Hongkong (Venue: Seminar Room 1)*
October 16, 2004	
10:30 - 12:30	Organic Farming of Salad Greens *by: Lee Masters Int'l. Systems, Inc. (Venue: Seminar Room 1)*
1:00 - 3:00	Global Strategic Initiatives of Syngenta on Food Value Chain *by: Syngenta Phils. (Venue: Seminar Room 1)*
3:30 - 5:30	*by: Belmont*

EXHIBITORS' LIST (as of September 16, 2004)

INDOOR: Abenar Eqpt •Aboitiz Transport Group•Agri Specialist•Agrimate•Amanatosan Trading•Aquasur Resources•Argent Lab.•Art, Inc.•Asia Giant Ent.•Atlanta Inds •Belmont•Biomin Lab. Singapore•CEFN Phils.•Chia-Tung Phils.•Cledacor Ent.•Cryo Reefer Van•DA Regional Office•DA-NAFC•DAR•Diconex (Phils.)•Easy Bio Phils.•Eurasia Cassava Ventures•FBIC Reefer Van Corp •Feedmix Specialist•Fibervan Mfg & Trading•First Phil. Scale•Floatech Int'l.•Gallery Red•Gourmet Farms•Grains Handlers Phils.•Inca Plastics•Interheat•Jeida Farm Supply Corp •Jenn Yang Livestock Resources•L.A. Agro Ind'l. Tecnnik•Lexber•Luz Farm•Manila Bulletin Publishing•Marid Agribusiness Digest•Maysan Casting•MIK Phils.•Mingley Trades & Imports•Monsanto Phils •New Iatson Weighing Eqpt.•Nuevo Milenio, Inc.•OPTA•P&J Agr'l Trading•Paleeno AP, Inc.•Philchema•PHILFOODEX, Inc.•Philmalay Poultry Breeders•PIC Phils.•Pixografx•Plastimer Ind'l. Corp.•Purina•Royal Vet•Sanko Plastics•Sea Crop Multipurpose Coop.•Shenzhen Starway Ent.•SMFI B-Meg•SMFI Vet Med•Sparkler Far East•Superyet Int'l.•Syngenta Phils.•Tang-Cor Mfg •Tefal Mktg.•United Vinyl•Univet Agr'l. Prods.•Vemavar•VIV Thailand•Wasmiya Holdings•*FRENCH Pavilion:* Bayle/PAL•France Hybrides•Le Cellier/Fiee Des Lois•Mission Economique•Pamora Farm•Sasso-Sepalm•Stolz Sequipag

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HOSPITALIA ACTIVEHEALTH (PHILIPPINES), INC., a corporation duly recognized and existing under Philippine laws with principal office at 4/F, Fortune Bldg., Legaspi Village, Makati City, hereby serves notice that on June 18, 2004, the stockholders and the board of directors of said corporation, with a legal quorum respectively acting throughout a special meeting duly called in accordance with its By-Laws, have amended its Articles of Incorporation by shortening its corporate life effective October 31, 2004, subject to approval of the Securities and Exchange Commision.

(Sgd.) RUFO C. VENUS, JR.
Corporate Secretary

ADVT.

MB delays banks' shift to new rules

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE MONETARY Board has moved the deadline for banks to comply with stricter accounting rules, from early next year to between June 2005 and June 2006.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas officer-in-charge Alberto Reyes said the policy-making body agreed during its meeting last week to move the deadline, as most banks would not be able to switch to the International Accounting Standards by Jan. 1.

"The banks will not be able to comply because there will be a major impact on the acquisition of infrastructure, major changes to be done in IT (information technology) software and it will take time for banks to adjust," Reyes told reporters.

The board specifically referred to IAS provisions 30, 32 and 39.

IAS 30 prescribes stricter disclosure standards on items such as off-balance sheet items, maturity of assets and liabilities, concentrations of assets, liabilities and off-balance sheet items, losses on loans and advances, general banking risks and assets pledged as security.

On the other hand, IAS 32 requires a broad range of disclosures about financial instruments, including information as to their fair values.

IAS 32 works hand in hand with IAS 39, which in turn deals with the recognition and measurement of financial assets and liabilities, including derivatives on an interest in a subsidiary, associate, or joint venture.

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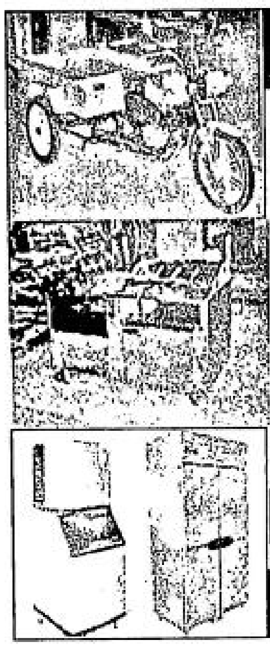

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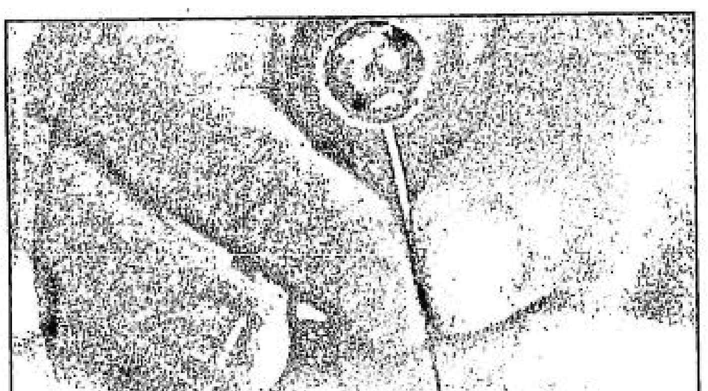

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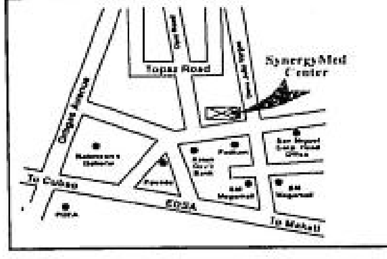

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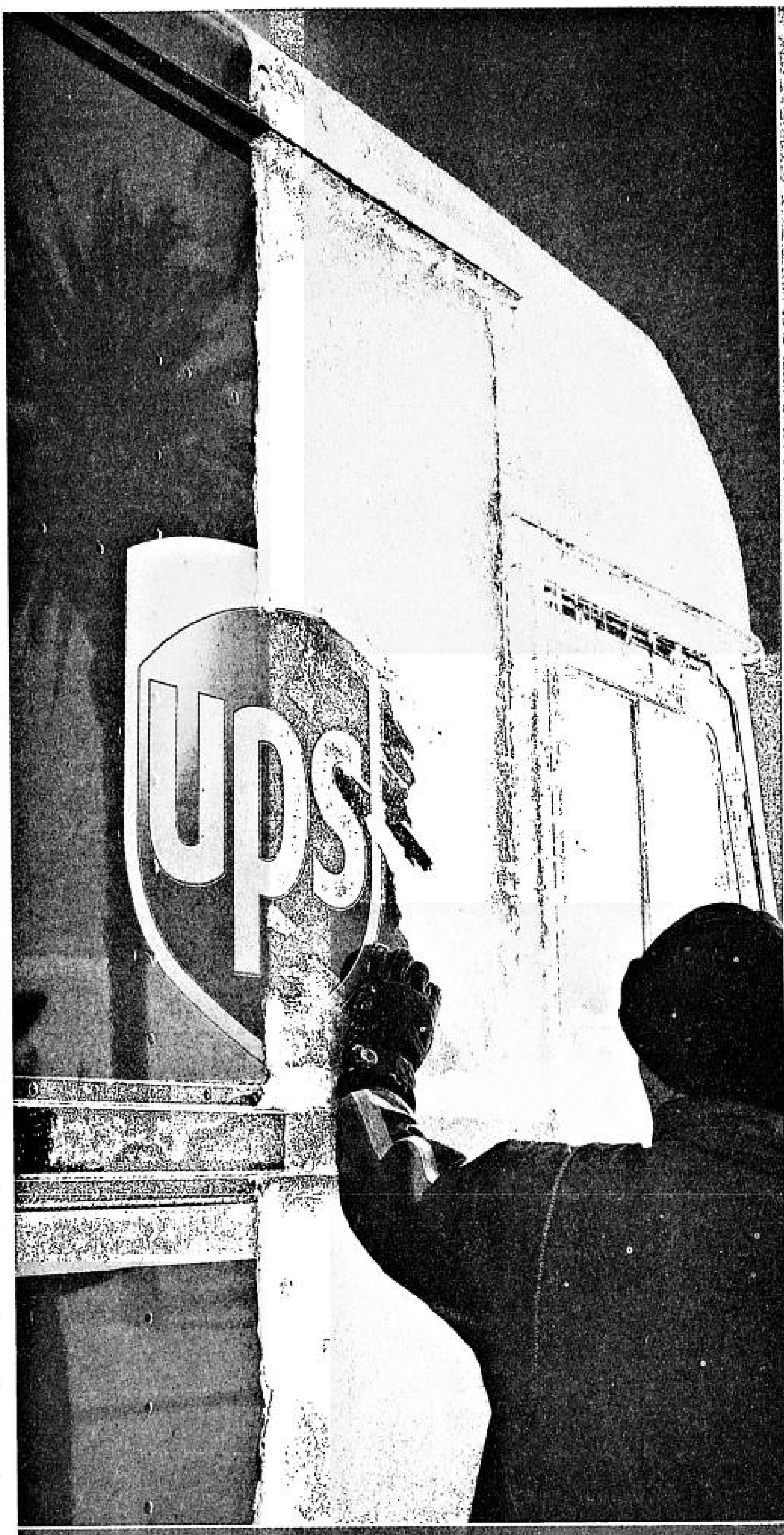

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Overcoming SME hurdles

No Free Lunch

Cielito F. Habito

WHY don't we have enough true small and medium enterprises (SMEs)—those with 10-199 workers or P3-P100 million in assets—but have instead a preponderance of micro-enterprises? In most discussions with those in the know, four important constraints stand out, namely: (1) financing, (2) access to technology, (3) availability of raw materials, and (4) access to markets.

Money is there, but...

Financing has consistently emerged as the most limiting constraint to the growth of SMEs in the country. It is not so much a lack of funds potentially available for SME lending; it is, rather, the difficulty of access to these funds. Theoretically, there should be enough funds for SME financing. The law now even requires banks to allocate 8 percent of their loan portfolios to SMEs, while government financial institutions have their own special SME windows. Still, private banks (with a few worthy exceptions) tend to shun SMEs because of a general aversion to dealing with a larger number of smaller accounts. There is also the perception that SMEs are greater credit risks than their larger counterparts, a premise that is actually questionable in light of experience in the aftermath of the Asian financial crisis. Many SMEs are also unable to access bank funds for a variety of reasons, including limited track record, lack of acceptable collateral, and inadequate financial statements and business plans.

If one looks at BSP records, it would appear that banks are generally complying with the mandatory lending to SMEs. In truth, much of these funds do not actually go to SMEs as some large firms deliberately understate their assets (e.g. to evade taxes), thereby getting misclassified as medium scale. Besides, banks can substitute other qualified investments as compliance with the law.

Start-up SMEs require long-term funds to match the long-gestating nature of their businesses, but financial institutions rarely offer such long-term loans. What the sector needs are venture capital and equity funds, which few are again willing to go into.

Meanwhile, much of the special lending programs supported by government and donor agencies are directed more to livelihood and micro-enterprise projects, not to true SMEs. We have already argued before why these types of enterprises, of which we have too many (92 percent of all enterprises), cannot be relied upon to provide the quality jobs that would keep our workers here at home.

Inferior technology

Most SMEs in the country are held back by low level of technology, with production methods that are generally not very efficient, even wasteful. The result is inconsistent product quality and slow processes, rendering them uncompetitive. Product quality and quality assurance of raw materials could be better addressed if more firms follow certified methods and undergo performance or quality tests. However, we lack common support facilities like testing centers and standardization agencies, whether government- or private sector-operated. We also need common research and development (R&D) facilities, inasmuch as individual SMEs cannot afford to undertake their own R&D in-house.

While internationally recognized quality management systems standards are available (e.g. the ISO 9000 series), our SMEs prefer to rely on their own homegrown quality systems. The high cost and the high degree of formalization and documentation required by the recognized systems put them beyond reach of most SMEs. But this also largely shuts them out of the export markets.

Availability of inputs

SMEs often find it difficult or expensive to access raw materials and inputs. First, there is the general problem of sourcing and transporting raw materials due to inadequate infrastructure and communication facilities. Second, government policies often make inputs more expensive for SMEs. Import tariff policies raise the cost of key raw materials and intermediate inputs. In the food business, for example, sugar is made much more expensive by the very high level of trade protection enjoyed by the sugar industry. Similarly, packaging materials are made more expensive by government protection on petrochemicals and plastics. Third, there is uncertainty, seasonality and instability of supply of raw materials because SMEs also depend on household or backyard suppliers. In the food processing sector, for example, the type of banana (saba) used in making exportable banana chips comes from backyard farmers. Similarly, the instability of local meat supplies prompts meat processors to advocate for liberalized importation of meat.

Access to markets

Getting in the way of SMEs' access to markets is inferior transport and communication infrastructure. They also have limited access to market information, especially Internet-based information, borne out of limited access to ICT in general. A key impediment to our SMEs' gaining a foothold in export markets is their inability to respond to volume demands due to lack of effective SME organizations. The problem is also a cultural one: Filipinos are said to be too individualistic and too reluctant to pool together with competitors when volume demands from abroad require it. As a result, we have been losing too many opportunities to our neighbors.

Having a vibrant SME sector is widely agreed to be a key goal we must pursue. But the road to get there is a long and winding one.

Comments welcome at chabito@ateneo.edu

PAL aims for 99% . . .

From page B1

PAL would always start the day with on-time flights. A delayed flight in the middle of the day would start a domino effect of delays.

"What we are doing is to have the planes back in Manila as soon as possible and to spend less time on the ground in the provinces. The planes have to be in Manila because this is where the checks and maintenance are being done. We don't have that in the provinces," he explained.

He said PAL was now focusing on improving service to customers, increasing productivity and enhancing efficiency.

"We owe it to our customers to improve our service. Customer service is now the priority of PAL and we are talking about end-to-end, from ticketing to delivering the passengers and cargo to their destination," Bautista said.

But to improve efficiency, Bautista said PAL must first get out of rehabilitation so it would have more flexibility to improve its operations.

PAL had said that its creditors must allow it to get out of rehabilitation this year so it could consider borrowing funds for expansion. The company's 10-year rehabilitation started in 1999.

Asia's oldest airline was forced to go into rehabilitation in 1999 following crippling labor problems and a failure to settle debts totaling $2.2 billion. The rehabilitation called for $200 million in fresh equity provided by Tan.

Like any company under rehabilitation, the flag carrier is barred from incurring new loans and every material decision like the purchase of new airplanes or flying to new routes have to be approved by creditors.

The 47-year-old Bautista was named president of PAL last Aug. 26. He replaced Avelino Zapanta who had retired.

A MESSAGE TO CONSUMERS FROM SONIC STEEL INDUSTRIES

THIS IS TO INFORM THE PUBLIC THAT U.S. PATENT NO. 3,343,930 ISSUED ON SEPTEMBER 26, 1967 ENTITLED "FERROUS METAL ARTICLE COATED WITH AN ALUMINUM ZINC ALLOY" AND U.S. PATENT NO. 3,393,089 ISSUED ON JULY 16, 1968 ENTITLED "METHOD OF FORMING IMPROVED ZINC-ALUMINUM COATING ON FERROUS SURFACES" HAVE LONG BECOME PART OF THE PUBLIC DOMAIN, THESE PATENTS HAVING EXPIRED A LONG TIME AGO.

EPIFANIO M. EVASCO, DIRECTOR OF PATENTS, IN A LETTER DATED JULY 20, 2004 TO SONIC STEEL INDUSTRIES VICE PRESIDENT FOR CORPORATE AFFAIRS BIENVENIDO L. DULCE JR, CERTIFIED THAT THESE PATENTS "ARE ALREADY IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN AND ANYONE CAN USE THE SAID INVENTIONS WITHOUT FEAR OF INFRINGEMENT UNDER THE IP (INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY) CODE OF THE PHILIPPINES."

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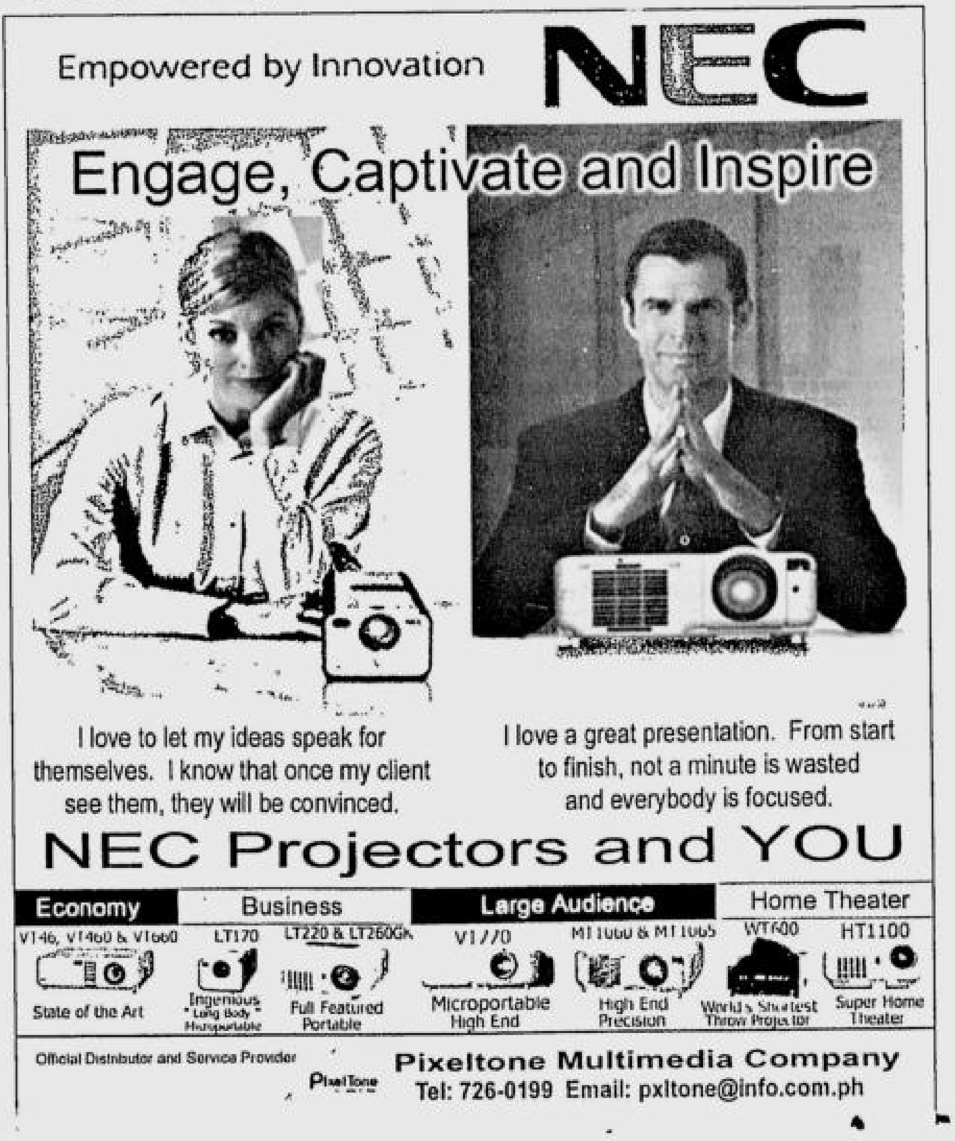
ADVT.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Target: PriceSmart

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

THE FORMER No. 2 man of PriceSmart, with the financial backing of local investors, is opening a bigger and cheaper warehouse club designed to undercut his former employer.

American expatriate Randy Labrecque, together with Guess franchisee Victor Siasat, Edmond Thelmo (son of insurance executive Benneth Thelmo), and Cebu sardine factory owner Eric Uy, is opening the Cost-U-Less warehouse club in Libis sometime in November.

Though similarly named, the local Cost-U-Less, according to the grapevine, is independent of the Washington-based chain but would nevertheless source the bulk of its US goods from the Nasdaq-listed company.

Labrecque, who is married to a Cebuana, resigned from PriceSmart early this year after a falling out with country manager Benjamin Woods.

Unlike PriceSmart, Cost-U-Less is a non-membership club, meaning the store will be open to the general public despite its US warehouse club orientation. Moreover, the Libis store would also be more than twice as big as PriceSmart, occupying two hectares whose property is being leased from Republic Glass.

According to the grapevine, 10 officers and personnel have already left PriceSmart to join Labrecque, a reputed merchandising expert, in his new venture.

It is not immediately clear if Siasat, another marketing wizard, would have day-to-day functions in the warehouse store; his late-model Jaguar coupe is often seen parked late afternoons in front of the Prudential Guarantee building in Legaspi Village.

But that is another story.

Choco détente

TRADERS Lucio Co and William Tieng have struck up a modus vivendi, this we have on good authority, to stop the fratricidal warfare now threatening to engulf the two big importers.

Co is said to be the silent principal of the new chocolate monopoly supplier of the country's duty free shops, whose previous supply contract had been held for years by Tieng and a clutch of other smaller importers.

According to the grapevine, Tieng went to see Co last week to condole with the death of his mother.

There at the wake, the two bitter competitors, who reportedly started out as friends, struck up an arrangement whereby the public hearings being called for by their congressional allies would no longer be pursued.

And speaking of Co, the PureGold supermarket/department store chain owner have reportedly sold his majority stake in Fontana Resort and Country Club to Hongkonger Jack Lam.

Lam, said to be the real owner of Fort Ilocandia as well, plans to follow the successful turnaround strategy of the Ilocos Norte resort to revive the moribund Clark resort.

Danding's 'son-in-law'

FORMER Accra lawyer Leo Palma, the "son-in-law" of San Miguel chair Eduardo Cojuangco Jr. who was disbarred last week by the Supreme Court upon Danding's petition, is currently a deputy director of the Advisory Centre on WTO Law in Geneva.

Geneva was where he and his "wife" relocated to escape the wrath of Danding after their surreptitious marriage in Hong Kong in 1982.

Up to the early Cory years, Palma and his "wife", Ma. Luisa Cojuangco, Danding's fourth child and youngest, had been opposing the move of the Cojuangco parents to have their marriage annulled.

To those who failed to read the Saturday INQUIRER, Palma was, it turned out, a very much married man when he exchanged "I dos" with the Cojuangco daughter in the Crown Colony.

To rub salt into the wound, Palma's airline ticket and per diem had been on account of Danding, the lawyer supposedly stopping over only in Hong Kong on his way to Australia for a Danding assignment.

Despite Cojuangco's ties with Marcos and then President Estrada, Palma remained up to 2001 employed as legal attaché of the Permanent Mission of the Philippines to the World Trade Organization in Geneva, before moving over to the WTO proper.

According to the grapevine, the brilliant IP lawyer owed his Geneva stint and, possibly, his continuing good health, on the sponsorship of Ka Blas Ople.

Incidentally, the Cojuangco girl, who has a grown-up daughter in Geneva as a result of the Palma episode, is now back in the Philippines and married—very much legally—to a cardiologist; the latest union is blessed with a set of twins, much to the delight of the grandparents.

Heard through the grapevine

STOCKBROKER/insurance magnate Robert Coyiuto Jr. and Lucio Tan-ally Macario Te, erstwhile steadfast buddies, have been avoiding each other for months now. Coyiuto now pops up at the Manila Golf Club only on Saturdays when his former mentor, who has made the club his second office during weekdays, is not around.

(E-mail: cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com)

Add'l tax on used vehicle imports pushed

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE GOVERNMENT is looking at putting an additional specific duty of P500,000 on used vehicle imports on top of existing duties and taxes.

Used imports coming from outside Southeast Asia are currently slapped a 30-percent duty, an excise tax ranging from 2 to 60 percent depending on the sticker price and a 10-percent value-added tax imposed on the landed cost.

A proposed executive order that imposes an additional duty is being considered mainly to address the environmental issues resulting from the proliferation of imported used vehicles.

The imposition of the additional duty is likened to the practice in Australia, where imported used vehicles are slapped a surcharge of A$12,000 a unit.

The proposal has been taken up in a recent meeting of the Cabinet-level committee on tariff and related matters.

Trade Undersecretary Elmer C. Hernandez said in an interview such imports have normally reached "end-of-life" status in their countries of origin.

Hernandez said when vehicle models reach this point, manufacturers stop making replacement parts and components—and the vehicles become useless.

"When these are imported into the country, we become a dumping ground of other country's trash," he said.

The official added that in other countries, vehicle owners shell out money just to get their old vehicles garbaged. On the other hand, they are given incentives if they could find offshore destinations for their used vehicles.

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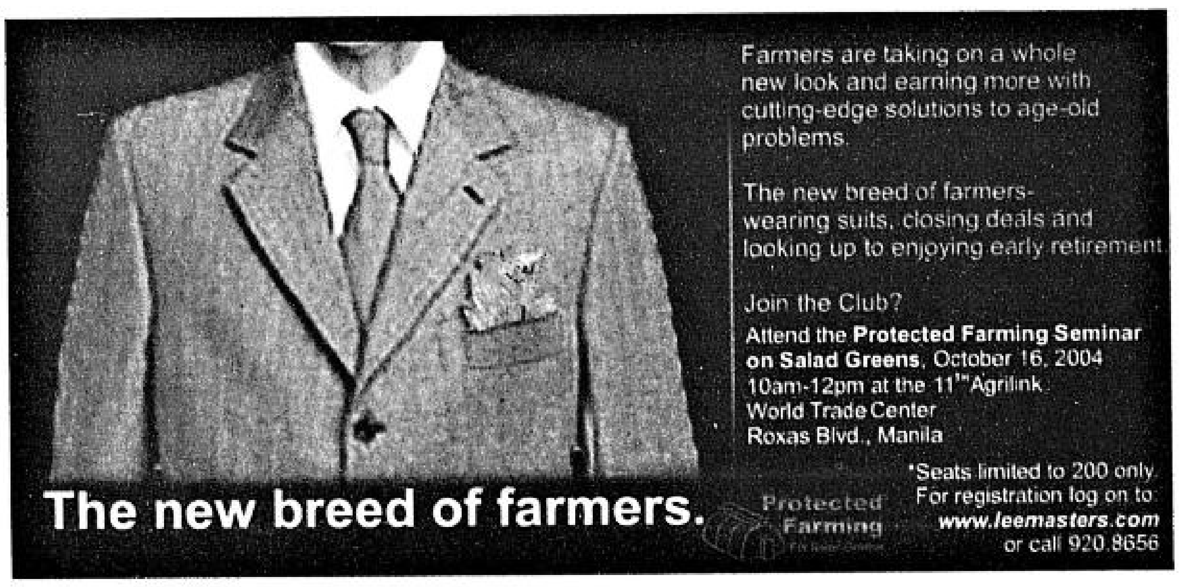

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PLANTERSBANK, AUREOS CAPITAL

$20-M fund for local SMEs readied

By Doris C. Dumlao

GLOBAL fund manager Aureos Capital Ltd. and Planters Development Bank are pooling a $20-million private equity fund for small and medium enterprises in the Philippines as part of a $70-million regional fund for Southeast Asia.

In an interview, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Officer-in-Charge Alberto Reyes said local lender Planters Bank would contribute $5 million or about 25 percent of the Philippine allocation.

"As presented by Planters Bank, this shall be the first private equity fund of its kind in the Philippines which can be a source of long-term risk capital that will benefit many promising SMEs," Reyes said.

SMEs are generally considered as a backbone of the economy, contributing about 32 percent of domestic productivity.

Reyes said the BSP's policy-making Monetary Board has approved Planters Bank's proposed investment in the local fund—to be called Planters Bank Aureos Fund—in its meeting last Thursday.

He said this would be part of the regional fund called Aureos Southeast Asia Fund Ltd.

Aureos Capital is an international manager of private equity funds, a market-leading risk capital investor in emerging markets with more than $300 million of committed capital. It has found a clear cut market niche in SMEs.

The fund has invested in more than 160 companies, with 89 exits achieved as of end-2003. The investment varied across Africa, Central America, Pacific Islands and South Asia. It is owned by institutional investors Commonwealth Development Corp. and Norfund.

It will be the first time that the global fund is investing in Southeast Asia, although it has existing offices in two markets in the region—the Philippines and Thailand.

For its part, Planters Bank, majority owned and managed by the Tambunting family, is the country's biggest private development bank with total consolidated assets of P30 billion, capital of P2.9 billion and network of 70 branches.

The bank has specialized in SME lending over the last 40 years and is a consistent recipient of awards and citations from the country's funding and guarantee agencies for SMEs. It is among the top 250 corporations in the Philippines.

The World Bank's International Finance Corp., the Netherlands' Development Finance Co. and Asian Development Bank represent a combined ownership of more than 40 percent in Planters Bank.

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Baguio Country Club	65K	-
Calatagan Golf Club "B"	60K	
Capitol Hills Golf Club	130K	175K
Canlubang Golf Club		please call
Celebrity Sports Club	140K	-
Eagleridge Golf Club "A"	220K	-
Eagleridge Golf Club "B"	290K	-
Eagleridge Golf Club "C"	330K	-
Eastridge Golf Club "B"	please call	-
Manila Golf Club - Ind	please call	please call
Manila Polo Club		2.4M
Manila Southwoods "A"	350K	
Manila Southwoods "B"	-	65K
Metro Club "A"	-	130K
Mt. Malarayat "C"		290K
Orchard Golf Club "A"	200K	
Orchard Golf Club "B"	please call	250K
Orchard Golf Club "C"	300K	
Palm Country Club	690K all in	350K
Punta Fuego	570K	-
Quezon City Sports Club "A"	please call	-
Riviera Golf Club "A"	100K	-
Rockwell Club	290K	-
Royale Tagaytay	90K	-
Sta. Elena Golf Club "A"	1.5M	please call
Sta. Elena Golf Club "B"		1.6M
Subic Yacht Club-Ind.	130K	
Tagaytay Country Club	-	380K
Tagaytay Higlands Golf Club		770K
Tagaytay Midlands	65K	-
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CLUB	BUYER	SELLER
Alabang Country Club "A" (Filipino)	1,000,000	1,300,000
Alabang Country Club "B" (Foreigner)	1,100,000	-
Baguio Country Club	500,000	600,000
Calatagan Golf Club "A"	-	60,000
Calatagan Golf Club "B"	-	90,000
Camp John Hay	-	200,000
Canlubang	400,000	550,000
Canyon Woods	-	200,000
Capitol Hills	100,000	130,000
Cebu Country Club	1,500,000	1,900,000
Celebrity Sports Club	-	160,000
Club Filipino	120,000	170,000
Eagleridge "A"	200,000	270,000
Eagleridge "B"	-	300,000
Eagleridge "C"	-	350,000
Forest Hills "A"	-	160,000
Forest Hills "B"	-	200,000
Forest Hills "C"	-	240,000
Makati Sports Club "A"	180,000	240,000
Makati Sports Club "B"	-	250,000
Manila Golf (Corporate)	10,800,000	Please Call
Manila Golf (Individual)	10,600,000	Please Call
Manila Polo	2,300,000	2,500,000
Manila Southwoods "A"	350,000	400,000
Manila Southwoods "B"	-	650,000
Manila Yacht Club	-	370,000
Metroclub "A"	150,000	-
Mimosa (Individual)	-	150,000
Mimosa (Corporate)	280,000	275,000
Mt. Malarayat Gold "C"	-	300,000
Orchard Golf Club "A"	180,000	-
Orchard Golf Club "B"	250,000	-
Orchard Golf Club "C"	-	350,000
Quezon City Sports Club		180,000
Sherwood Hills "B"	-	180,000
Rockwell	-	380,000
Spa & Lodge	550,000	650,000
Sta. Elena "A"	1,300,000	1,550,000
Subic Bay Yacht (Corporate)	-	200,000
Subic Bay Yacht (Individual)	-	120,000
Tagaytay Country Club	380,000	420,000
Tagaytay Highlands	750,000	800,000
Tagaytay Midlands	600,000	700,000
Valle Verde (Individual)	120,000	150,000
Valle Verde (Corporate)	-	200,000
Valley Golf	220,000	260,000
Wack-Wack Golf Club	6,300,000	6,600,000

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SEC approves iBank IPO

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission (SEC) approved the planned initial public offering of International Exchange Bank (iBank), which is targeting to list its shares this December.

The bank's maiden offering will hopefully be the first IPO for the stock market this year.

iBank will offer 8.35 million shares representing roughly 25 percent of the bank's 33.35 million outstanding shares. The offer price is estimated at P175 a share.

Of this, 5.34 million common shares are primary or new shares. The bank also granted an over-allotment option to its issue manager and underwriter to buy up to 2.1 million common shares coming from the 8.35 million shares offered.

The bank expects to raise gross proceeds of P1.5 billion with the additional allotment. Without it, it will raise P924.3 million. Net proceeds will amount to P846.1 million after offer expenses are deducted.

After the public offering, major shareholders will be also diluted. These are JTKC Equities, whose holdings will be reduced to 25.8 percent from 31.3 percent; holding firm iVantage's stake will be cut to 17.2 percent from 20.89 percent; Razon Industries will get diluted to 16.5 percent from 20 percent; Greenhills Properties to 9.3 percent from 11.3 percent, and Philippine Realty & Holdings Corp. to 8.6 percent from 10.4 percent.

iBank managed to grow its earnings to P433 million last year from P352 million on lower provisions for possible losses. As of the first quarter, its net profit stood at P171 million.

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Alta Vista	300,000	240,000
Baguio Country Club	630,000	550,000
Calatagan Golf	65,000	-
Camp John Hay	210,000	180,000
Canlubang Golf	450,000	370,000
Capitol Hills	135,000	-
Cebu Country Club	-	1,300,000
Celebrity Sports	150,000	-
Eagleridge A/B*/C**	250,000/350,000*/400,000**	-
Forest Hills A/C*	160,000/250,000*	210,000*
Luisita Golf	400,000	-
Manila Golf Corporate	11,500,000	Pls. Call
Manila Golf Ind.	Pls. Call	10,700,000
Manila Polo	2,500,000	2,250,000
Manila Southwoods A	420,000	-
Makati Sports Club	210,000	185,000
Metropolitan Club A/B*	180,000/200,000*	140,000
Mimosa C2/C3*	220,000	280,000*
Mimosa Golf Ind.	180,000	140,000
Mt. Malarayat A/B*	180,000	280,000*
Orchard A/B*/C**	230,000/330,000*/400,000**	170,000/Pls. Call*
Riviera Golf A/B*/C**	120,000/180,000*/200,000**	-
Rockwell Leisure Club	280,000	-
Royale Tagaytay CC	70,000	-
Sherwood A/B*	80,000	-
Spa & Lodge	650,000	830,000
Sta. Elena Golf	2,000,000	-
The Palms Country Club	Pls. Call	-
Tagaytay Country Club	400,000	360,000
Tagaytay Midlands	-	650,000
The Country Club	2,000,000	-
Valle Verde Ind.	150,000	-
Valley Golf	280,000	-
Wack Wack Golf	6,800,000	6,200,000

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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of September 17, 2004)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco De Oro Univ. Bank	17	17	17	17	22,000
Bank Of The Phil. Islands	44.5	44.5	44	44.5	59,900
Citystate Savings Bank	16.25	16.25	16.25	16.25	400
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	41.5	41.5	41.5	41.5	2,700
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	27.5	28	27	27	175,200
Prudential Bank	350	350	350	350	500
Philippine National Bank	22.25	22.25	22.25	22.25	400
Phil. Savings Bank	27.5	27.5	27.5	27.5	1,000
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	24,100
Security Bank Corp.	21.75	21.75	21.5	21.5	41,500
Union Bank Of The Phil.	24.5	25	24.5	25	12,200
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Manulife Financial Corp.	2435	2435	2435	2435	100
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.32	1.32	1.32	1.32	20,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	120	120	120	120	30
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1580	1605	1580	1605	4,580
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	21	21	20.5	20.75	26,500
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.68	0.68	0.68	0.68	1,460,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	1005	1005	1005	1005	19,970
Ipeople Inc.	1.64	1.64	1.64	1.64	3,000
Island Info And Tech Inc.	0.0575	0.0575	0.0525	0.0525	19,900,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.037	0.038	0.037	0.038	6,800,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	10,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	2.75	2.75	2.65	2.7	9,049,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	40,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1350	1350	1325	1325	222,220
Ivantage Corp.	0.63	0.64	0.63	0.64	1,030,000
Philweb Corp.	0.011	0.012	0.011	0.012	2,500,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	15.5	15.5	15.25	15.25	21,700
Manila Electric Co. B	23.5	23.5	23	23	440,200
Petron Corp.	2.7	2.75	2.7	2.7	460,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.14	1.14	1.12	1.12	285,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.44	1.44	1.44	1.44	10,000
Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp.	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	123,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	4.5	4.7	4.5	4.7	2,012,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	50,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	1,000
Republic Cement Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	10,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	18,000
Union Cement Corp.	2.2	2.3	2.2	2.28	5,601,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	28.5	28.5	28.5	28.5	21,500
Jollibee Foods Corp.	26	26	26	26	26,300
San Miguel Pure Foods A	70	70	70	70	100
Swift Food Inc.	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.37	220,000
San Miguel Corp. A	57.5	57.5	57.5	57.5	8,500
San Miguel Corp. B	69	70	69	70	136,800
Universal Robina Corp.	8.5	8.5	8.5	8.5	79,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	1,000,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Atok-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	3,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	61,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	1,000,000
Ayala Corp.	6	6	5.9	6	4,499,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	3.3	3.3	3.25	3.25	965,000
Ajo Net Holdings Inc.	0.034	0.034	0.033	0.033	8,000,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.38	1.4	1.36	1.4	416,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	10,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.56	1.58	1.56	1.58	23,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	0.99	0.99	0.99	0.99	10,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	14	14	13.5	13.75	39,500
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.57	0.57	0.56	0.56	4,810,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.125	200,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.28	0.28	1,970,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.15	0.15	0.145	0.15	1,200,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	2.16	2.22	2.14	2.16	7,285,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.033	0.033	0.033	0.033	100,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	4.05	4.05	4.05	4.05	26,000
F&J Prince Holdings Corp.	0.46	0.71	0.46	0.71	20,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	27	27	26.5	26.5	315,300
Global Equities Inc.	0.0775	0.08	0.0775	0.0775	6,700,000
Ionics Inc.	1.9	1.94	1.9	1.94	557,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	6,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.56	1.66	1.56	1.64	3,083,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	4,000,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.18	1.18	2,530,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.54	0.55	0.52	0.52	65,390,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	700,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	2.4	2.5	2.4	2.5	40,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.165	0.165	0.165	0.165	1,050,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.205	0.205	0.205	0.205	13,000,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.68	1.7	1.66	1.7	42,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	1	1	1	1	1,508,000
Steniel Manufacturing	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	10,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.71	0.71	0.69	0.69	1,110,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	10,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.59	0.65	0.59	0.65	2,090,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.35	0.35	1,070,000
Philippine Racing Club	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	70,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	21.5	21.5	20.5	20.5	156,900
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,600
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	2,500
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	3,500
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	20,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	6.1	6.1	6	6	3,672,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.48	0.49	0.45	0.46	74,830,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.16	0.165	0.16	0.165	250,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.37	0.38	0.36	0.37	50,690,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.04	1.04	1	1	8,971,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.215	0.215	0.215	0.215	120,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.43	0.43	0.43	0.43	300,000
SM Development Corp.	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	20,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6	6	5.9	6	22,744,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0055	0.006	0.0055	0.006	3,000,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	30,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.215	0.215	0.215	0.215	200,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	1,710,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.016	280,500,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.018	0.018	0.018	0.018	144,200,000
Omico Corp.	0.0065	0.007	0.0065	0.0065	357,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.032	0.032	0.032	0.032	1,500,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.37	410,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.125	500,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.013	0.013	0.012	0.012	2,500,000
Interport Res.	0.0044	0.0044	0.0044	0.0044	19,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.0044	0.0044	0.0044	0.0044	2,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.004	0.0042	0.004	0.004	82,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	34,000,000
Pacifica	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	6,300,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.6	100,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.035	0.039	0.035	0.036	21,600,000

Profit-taking seen to continue

From page B1

dent at Eagle Equities Inc.

Most analysts said the stock market was bound to head south after gaining for nine straight days.

"For most of us, the technical correction has been overdue and the resignation of a key government official was used as an excuse to cash in on gains," Jovis Vistan of AB Capital Securities said.

For the week, the Philippine Stock Exchange composite index shed 70 points or 4 percent to close at 1,681.35.

Vistan said traders were on the lookout for a reason to take profits and found one in the resignation of National Treasurer Mina Figueroa last week, a key official in the Arroyo administration's economic team.

But this was a "temporary setback," according to fund managers.

Banco de Oro Trust head of investment and senior assistant vice president Proceso Z. Mendoza Jr. said the resignation of Figueroa had caused initial jitters among currency investors since it was unexpected.

But the fall in the stock market was hardly blamed on the resignation.

"This market's fall is not attached to the resignation. The market has been going up a week now and it has reached all-time highs. It has been overbought and is already due for a correction," Mendoza said.

A local fund manager said that while the resignation came at a time when the government was struggling to plug its gaping budget deficit, what was more important was that policies were harmonized. The comment followed reports that the resignation of Figueroa was triggered by policy differences with other finance officials over the government's borrowing stance.

"If there are differences, we can't afford to have these disagreements. One way or the other, it takes out the uncertainty," the local fund manager said.

Vistan said that this week, investors will look at the meeting of the US Federal Reserve where policy makers may raise federal fund rates by a quarter of a percentage point to 1.75 percent.

"Beyond the expected rate adjustment, we don't expect the Fed to adopt a more aggressive policy on rates as long as US inflation remains in check," Vistan said.

"We expect light trading ahead after almost a month of decent gains. The market has become so overbought after the rallies of the past two weeks that we need to let some air out. It also makes a lot of sense for equities to take a pause on less-than-encouraging news. Although the market's bullish trend appears to remain intact even after the correction, we still don't have a clear picture of when the bulls will come back," Vistan added.

BPI Trade observed that selling was across the board, led by phone giant Philippne Long Distance Telephone Co., and Globe Telecom. Other stocks that were also sold down included Ayala Corp., Ayala Land , SM Prime Holdings, Manila Electric Co., First Philippine Holdings, Ginebra San Miguel, and banks Metrobank, Philippine National Bank and Equitable PCI.

"The market is likely to continue with the sideways movement as it is now in consolidation mode. Telecom stocks PLDT and Globe, which led the uptick in the main composite, continue to suffer from profit taking in the absence of new developments ... Or accumulation may start to appear once we near the end of the third quarter on expectations of strong earnings for the period," BPI said. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

RP may again tap international capital market

By Michelle V. Remo

DESPITE its heavy debt burden, the Philippines may yet again tap the international capital market as economic officials go off on a two-week roadshow that will begin Wednesday.

According to Finance Secretary Juanita Amatong, who will lead other delegates to the roadshow, the government welcomes the idea of again borrowing from international bond investors if market prices will be attractive.

"Our policy has always been to do opportunistic borrowing. If the price is good, then we will borrow," Finance Secretary Juanita Amatong said in an ambush interview with reporters.

The Department of Finance stressed, however, that there was no firm decision to make another bond issue.

During the roadshow, the country's top economic officials will brief international bond investors, foreign direct investors and representatives from credit-rating agencies on the country's economy, with particular focus on the fiscal sector.

Aside from Amatong, the roadshow will be participated in by BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura, BSP Deputy Governor Amando Tetangco Jr., and Trade and Industry Secretary Cesar Purisima.

It will kick off in Hong Kong, and will continue on to Singapore, London, New York, and end in Washington.

While the roadshow is a regular event for economic officials, it is expected to focus this time on convincing the international capital market to keep their confidence on the Philippines amid talks of the country's fiscal problems.

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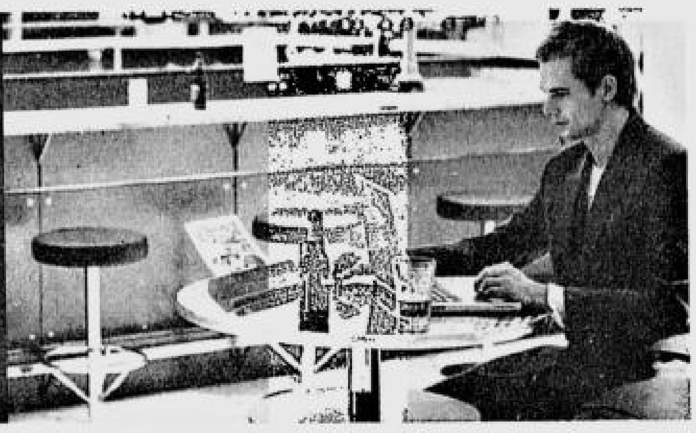

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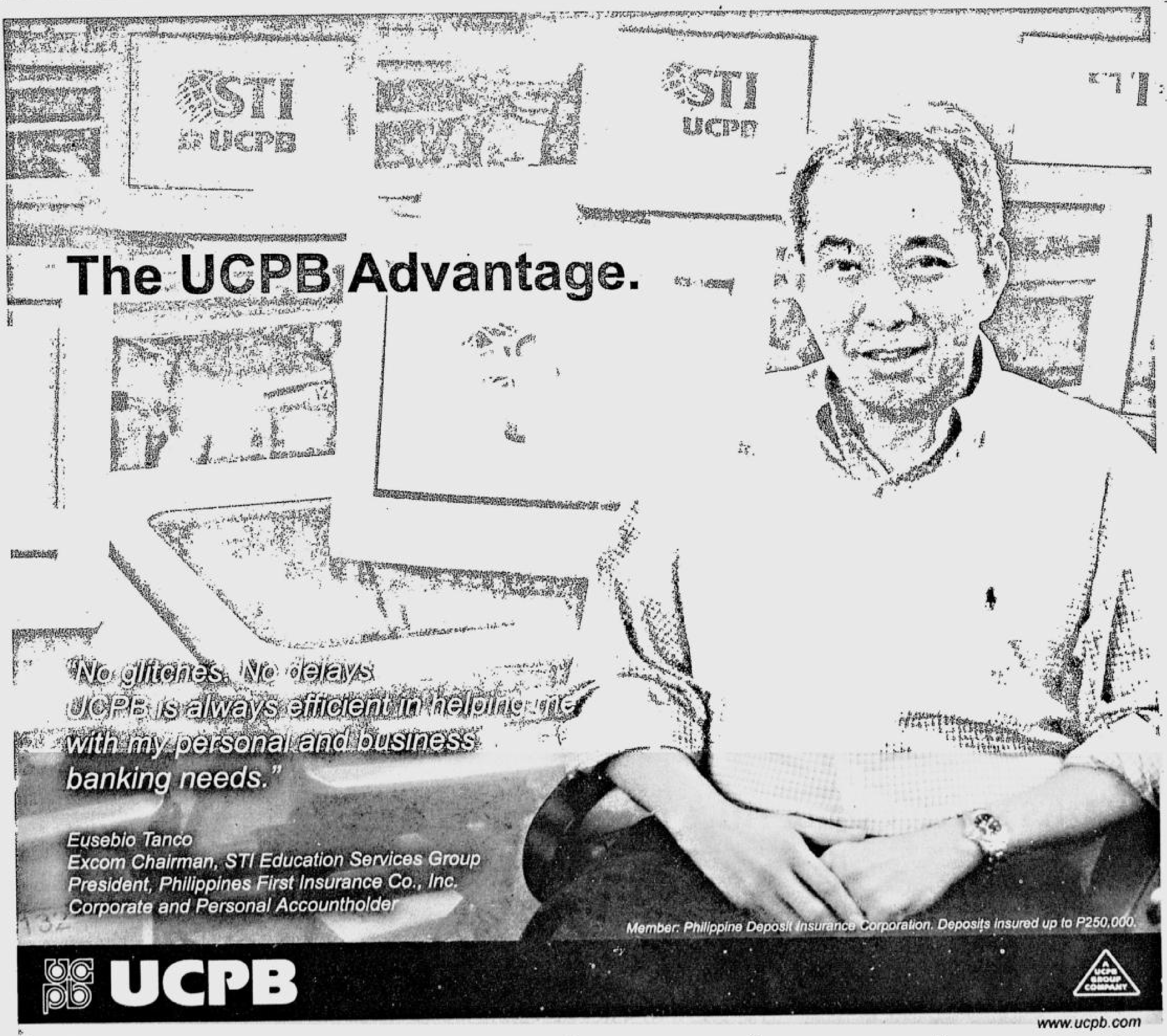

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DOF rejects Congress bid to remove automatic debt allocation in budget

By Michelle V. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance has rejected outright the proposal in Congress to remove the government's automatic budget allocation for debt servicing, saying that the proposal will not ease the country's fiscal woes.

The DOF said the automatic appropriation for debt payments coming from its annual budget is an important tool that keeps the international credit community confident that the country will pay its loans.

"It's up to them (legislators) if they want the country to sink," said Finance Secretary Juanita Amatong during an interview.

Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago is pushing for the removal of the automatic budget appropriation for debt servicing. During the Senate budget hearing last week, Santiago said that debt payments should not be automatic, but should instead pass the scrutiny of Congress.

The senator raised the proposal after she noted that a huge part of the budget allocated for debt servicing were only used to bail out government-owned and -controlled corporations from their huge liabilities.

GOCCs, especially heavy losers like the National Power Corp., are being criticized for aggravating the national government's precarious fiscal situation, while their top officials are enjoying fat salaries.

"The government should not tolerate abusive GOCCs," Santiago said. "Not even a single peso should be used by the national government to bail them out."

But the DOF and the Department of Budget and Management said sanctions on GOCCs would not have to be as drastic as lifting the automatic appropriation for debt servicing.

The proposal will only impair the national government's ability to access foreign capital markets for its own credit needs, the two agencies explained.

Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin was quoted by news reports as saying that the DBM would not agree with Santiago's proposal because creditors would no longer lend to the Philippines if the proposal were to push through.

The country's public sector debt last year reached P5.9 trillion, almost half of which is accounted for by borrowings of state-owned companies.

The Senate earlier noted that while the government appears to have the bigger share of the debt, a substantial part of the borrowings was actually used to pay liabilities of GOCCs.

The government's automatic budget allocation for debt servicing is mandated by Presidential Decree No. 117. About a third of the total budget is used to pay off government loans.

The national government has allocated for 2005 P301.7 billion for debt servicing. The original debt service proposal stood at P907.6 billion.

NTC wants extra powers to regulate media firms

THE NATIONAL Telecommunications Commission is asking Congress to grant it stronger police powers to regulate phone, media companies, while retaining a portion of the revenue the NTC collects yearly for its operations.

It also asked legislators to turn NTC into a bigger, better equipped organization to solve the problems of the sector as well as curb irregularities.

As of August, the NTC had collected about P520 million. By year end, the amount of fees should reach about P1.2 billion.

NTC chair Ronald Solis said the agency had started drafting a bill to turn the commission into a collegial body just like the Securities and Exchange Commission, composed of a chair and four commissioners.

Just like the SEC, the NTC is seeking fixed tenure for its officials for continuity of policies and to insulate the commissioners from political pressures.

"We are asking Congress for stronger powers, including police powers, to go after errants," said Solis. "We are working on a draft bill with Rep. Simeon Kintanar, a former NTC chair, to reorganize and strengthen the NTC."

The NTC was created by Executive Order 546. A bill is being prepared to strengthen the mandate of the Commission.

"The NTC wants natural independence so it could be allowed to use a portion of the revenue it generates," said Solis.

Solis said that currently, all collections of the NTC were remitted to the national treasury. Last year, the agency delivered P1.8 billion due to a windfall collection from past due accounts.

This year, he said the NTC should collect between a billion pesos to P1.2 billion.

"We shall be following up with the telcos with huge overdue obligations," said Solis.

The NTC is pressing the collection of P1.3 billion in overdue regulatory fees from Piltel from 1997 to September 2004. Smart Communications Inc., according to the NTC, also had to settle about P100 million in spectrum users fee.

The NTC had given all covered institutions until the end of the month to settle their regulatory fees. *Clarissa S. Batino*

The deepening crisis

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

THE PAPER, "The Deepening Crisis: The real score on deficits and the public debt," written by 11 professors of the University of the Philippines School of Economics, is not for Sunday leisure reading.

One has to grapple with highfaluting sentences such as, "if undertaken with resolve, demonstrable solidarity between both the leadership, and a modicum of understanding from the public, the effects of these measures should result in a palpable easing of the crisis atmosphere and a gradual return of investor-confidence by late next year." I have always wondered why PhDs write that way.

But, when you cut through the verbiage, the paper draws a clear road map on how to cut the P200-billion deficit by P150 billion, and how deficits can be avoided in the future without further legislation.

The paper proposes that the Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) should be cut to the 30 percent minimum prescribed by law. Why should the local government officials complain? They will still have a lot of money to spend.

The pork barrel will be cut, not wiped out. Each senator will have to make do with P100 million, each congressman with P30 million. That is still a lot of money to play around with.

New taxes are proposed. Tax exemptions will be eliminated. All these will bring in additional revenue of about P100 billion. So, what else is new. President Ramos raised more than that during his watch.

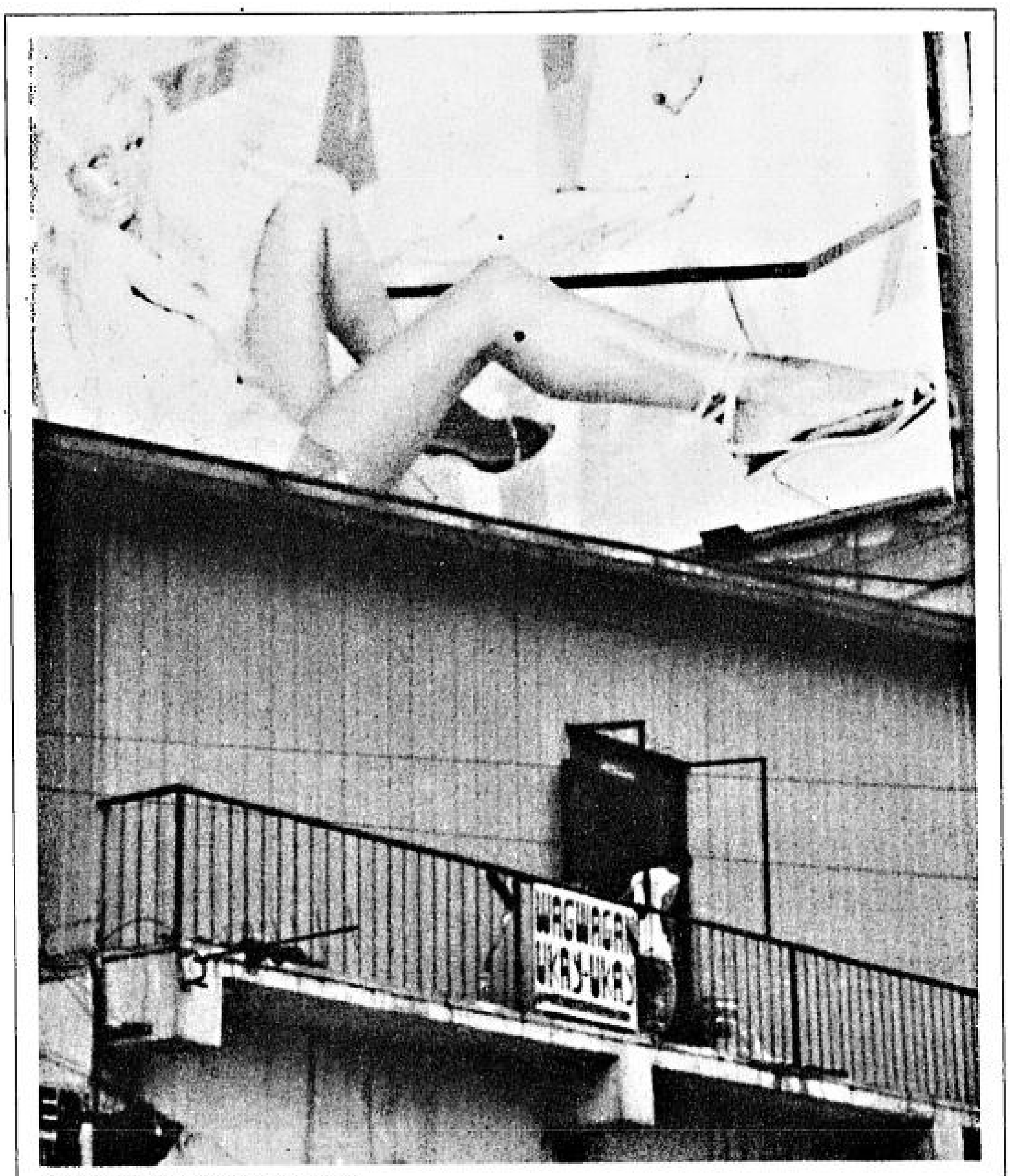
*Having drawn the road map for getting out of the fiscal hole, the paper stops. The UP11 should have gone one step further to make their strongest selling point. For years, the banks have said that the government's heavy borrowings have been the cause of the highest interest rates in this part of the world. If the deficit is cut as suggested in the paper, the government will borrow P150 billion less from the banks. This should bring down interest rates. As a result, the additional taxes will be paid by the taxpayers out of their savings in interest payments. As interest rates go down, so will consumer prices. By cutting the deficit then, everybody, especially the Filipino consumer, wins. This is the point that the paper missed.

But, will interest rates really go down? Not if the banking cartel can help it. The banking cartel will crack the whip on their members to keep interest rates high. The Bangko Sentral governor should stop being a commercial banker and start acting like a central banker.

And even if interest rates do go down, will consumer prices drop? Not if the various cartels—cement, chicken, pork, beef, rice, tuna; the list is endless—can help it. The cartels will try to keep prices from dropping. That is what cartels are for. Those so-called price coordinating government councils should stop cooperating with the cartels. The role of government on prices is to provide a free and open market where buyers and sellers fight for mutually agreed prices.

To heighten competition, the local market should be opened to foreigners. Before the nationalists scream to high heaven, let us look at what has happened to the fire insurance industry. For decades, the price of a fire insurance policy was dictated by a cartel. This was the only cartel in our history that had a government license. Not only that, the Insurance Commission was the enforcer of the cartel's prices. Ten years ago, in line with the Asean free trade agreements, the cartel's license was withdrawn and the industry was opened to foreign competition. Today, fire insurance rates are about one fourth what they were ten years ago. Yet, fire insurance remains a profitable business. And, as a whole, the insurance industry continues to pay its share—too big a share, if you ask me—in taxes.

My suggestion to the UP11 is this: whatever studies you undertake, think of the Filipino consumer, first and last.



ADVERTISING 'WAGWAG'

With the deficit choking off disposable incomes in the near future, large billboards for brand labels may seem frivolous. But it seems no crisis can put a good brand down, especially when the product can be found in "wagwag" (bargain house) shops, as advertised beneath this billboard of a high-end brand near Burnham Park in Baguio. "Wagwag" stores sell the same brands, secondhand to be sure, for far less its mall value.

VINCENT CABREZA

ERC condones loans of 5 more power coops

By Abigail L. Ho

THE ENERGY Regulatory Commission recently approved the applications of five more electric cooperatives (ECs) to have their loans condoned, a move seen to result in power rate reductions of as much as P1.35 per kilowatt-hour (kWh) in affected areas.

Because of the loan condonation approval, customers of the Basilan Electric Cooperative will be able to enjoy savings of P1.35 per kWh, as soon as the power distributor receives the official copy of the ERC order.

The other power cooperatives whose loans have been condoned are: Zamboanga del Norte Electric Cooperative, where consumers may expect monthly rates to be reduced by 17.23 centavos per kWh; Zamboanga del Sur I Electric Cooperative, with rates reduced by 14.37 centavos per kWh; Cebu II Electric Cooperative with rates reduced by 11.91 centavos per kWh and Zamboanga City Electric Cooperative with rates reduced by 5.78 centavos per kWh.

These newly issued loan condonation approvals brought to 83 the total number of final orders that the ERC had issued, the regulatory body said in a statement Friday.

The ERC is currently reviewing 18 more loan condonation requests. While doing so, it also hopes to receive from the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. the remaining 17 loan condonation applications that need to go through final audit.

"We are completing the loan condonation process with utmost urgency as we realize that consumer-members of ECs stand to benefit from the loan reprieve," ERC Chair Rodolfo Albano Jr. said.

CA rules against SEC in Baguio Country Club case

THE COURT of Appeals has junked the Securities and Exchange Commission's petition to reconsider the SEC decision to nullify the corporate watchdog's orders against Baguio Country Club.

This gives the SEC no other recourse but to go to the Supreme Court. The CA's Special 15th Division, in a three-page resolution dated Sept. 1, reiterated its findings that the matters raised against the club "does not call for SEC's power of regulation and supervision," but is rather "a function judicial in nature, which the SEC can no longer perform."

The appellate court stood firm in its decision dated March 26, 2004 that "the SEC has acted beyond its jurisdiction" in the BCC case and revoked the SEC's series of orders against the Club.

The appellate court division was composed of Justices Danilo Pine, Elvi John Asuncion and Monina Arevalo Zenarosa.

The row started when the mother-son tandem of Erlinda Ilusorio and Ramon Ilusorio sought the SEC's intervention in the inspection of corporate records and internal affairs, such as the term of directors, the contents of its bylaws and the decision to convert from stock to non-stock.

For its part, BCC claimed that the club's conversion to a nonprofit, non-stock corporation would translate to substantial tax savings that would be plowed back into its coffers, and fund ongoing expansion and renovation.

From August to November of 2003, the SEC issued orders against club officials to enable regulatory officials to intervene in the conduct of the stockholders' meetings, to inspect corporate records and to participate during the validation of proxies.

In their petition to the CA, BCC cited grave abuse of discretion on the part of the SEC and its general counsel, Vernette Umali-Paco, when she issued orders against Club officials allegedly without jurisdiction, and with evident partiality. *Doris C. Dumlao*

MB OKs stricter bank rules on governance

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE MONETARY Board of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas has approved a new blueprint to strengthen banks' corporate governance.

"With the changes, we are now closely aligned with the corporate governance rules of the Securities and Exchange Commission," Alberto Reyes, BSP officer-in-charge, told reporters.

The new guidelines include a requirement that the chair of a bank's audit committee must be an independent director or one without substantial equity interest in the bank.

Of the three-member audit committee, at least two must be independent directors. Reyes said this requirement was even stricter than the SEC's, as the corporate watchdog requires only one independent director in the audit committee.

Reyes said the rules also mandate the creation of a risk management committee which shall govern the banks' risk management program.

He added the terms of reference of all the audit committees must be approved and cleared by the banks' boards of directors, for enhanced accountability.

While boosting the accountability of banks' internal audit committees, the BSP is also seeking the creation of a regulatory body made up of external auditors to conform with global trends in the aftermath of the Enron scandal in the United States.

The BSP implements an accreditation system for external auditors of banks. However, Reyes said it might be necessary to put up a local regulatory body to govern all external auditors of the corporate sector, including banks, because that function could not be handled by the SEC alone.

52 airlines may land in Clark, says DOTC

THE ARROYO administration has given 52 airline companies landing rights on Clark International Airport to encourage carriers to consider using the former US air base.

"We have granted landing rights to 52 airlines," said Transport Secretary Leandro Mendoza. "But the actual movement would be subject to air talks facilitated by the CAB (Civil Aeronautics Board)."

Airlines may only start landing in Clark once the country allows additional flights to the Philippines, or when carriers move some of their operations to Clark from the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

Granting landing rights to carriers, according to Alfonso Cusi, general manager of the Manila International Airport Authority, would spur the development of the North Luzon airport facility.

"Once operational, Clark Airport aims to attract low-cost airlines carrying tourists and businessmen to the area," Cusi added. "It will also open the airport to and from the Middle East, carrying overseas Filipino workers from Central and Northern Luzon, and the Cordillera Autonomous Region."

Carriers were reluctant to use Clark airport because of its location. Clark also had not generated sufficient volume to make operations viable. Aside from that, Mendoza said, the airport facility needed improvement and interconnection with Manila remained much to be desired.

Only Korean carrier Asiana airlines flies to and from Clark five times weekly from Incheon.

"By November, we're going to open the MNTC (North Expressway)," Mendoza said. "We're already starting the construction of the North Rail and complete this in 2 to 3 years, or just in time for the full utilization of the airport."

The government had committed to spend P2 billion to expand Clark airport.

According to Mendoza, they are also hoping to build airports in Panglao, Bohol, Coron in Northern Palawan and San Fernando in La Union. *Clarissa S. Batino*

RP risks new credit-rating downgrade

From page B1

rating from Moody's Investor Service is at BA2 (negative outlook). All ratings are below investment grade.

The Philippines last experienced a credit-rating downgrade in January this year, when Moody's Investor Service lowered its assessment of the country to a "negative outlook."

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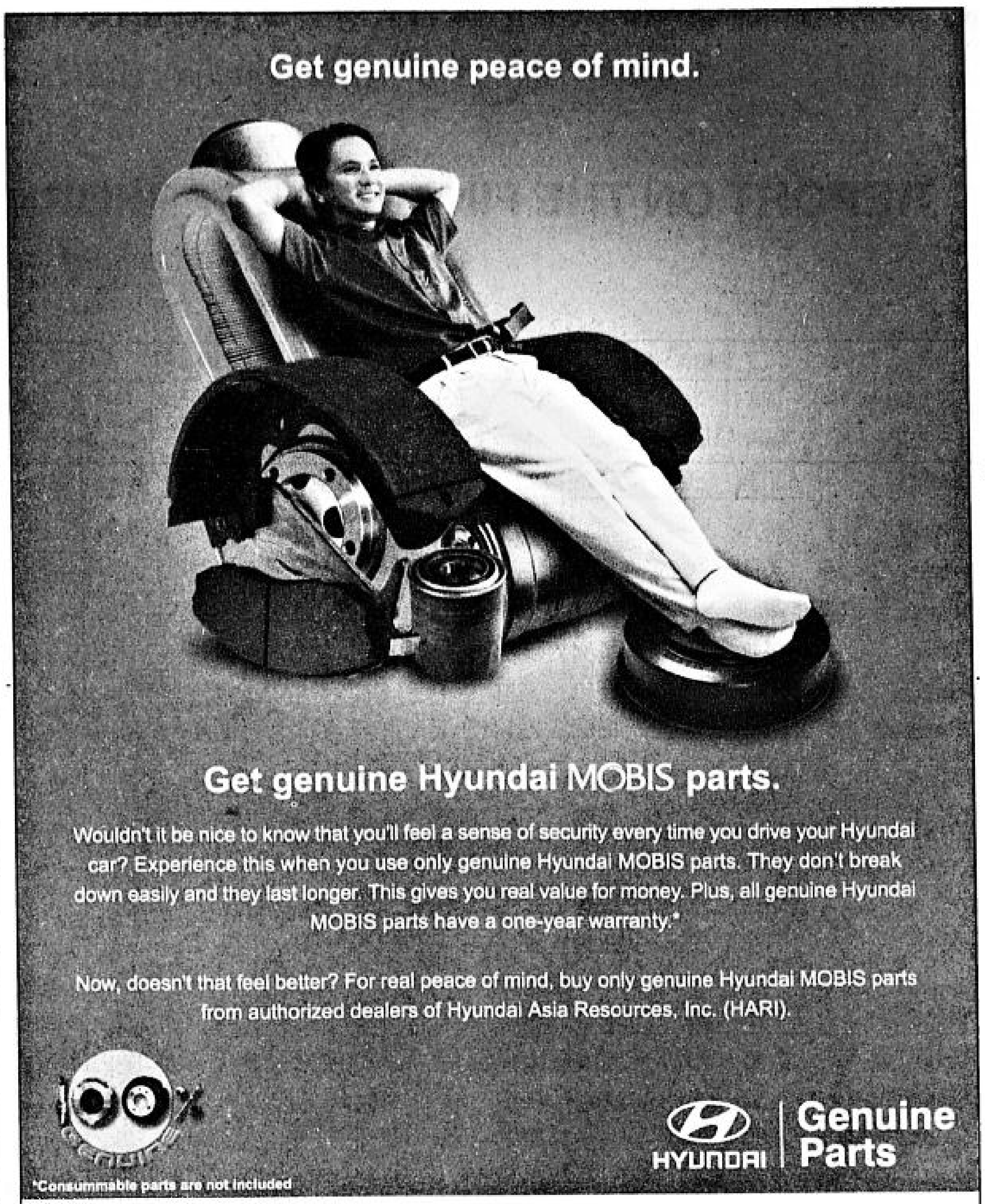

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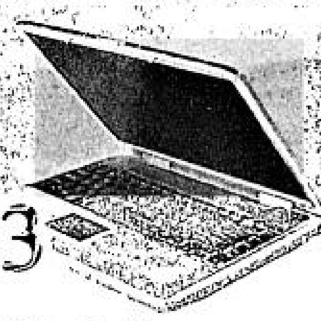

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COMMISSION ON AUDIT
Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City

REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE OF 102 CITIES – FY 2003

(in thousand pesos)

Cities	Class	Balance Sheet			Statement of Income and Expenses									
		Total Assets	Total Liabilities	Total Equity	Total Income	*Rank 1	*Rank 2	Total Expenses	*Rank 1	*Rank 2	Net Income	*Rank 1	*Rank 2	% of Net Income to Total Income
Region 1		3,311,030	766,167	2,544,862	2,033,676			1,360,468			673,208			33
Alaminos	5	219,722	16,407	203,314	186,161	7	94	82,927	8	101	103,233	3	30	55
Candon	5	499,642	60,063	439,579	301,196	1	47	111,679	6	93	189,517	1	8	63
Dagupan	2	389,137	56,235	332,902	285,999	3	50	276,404	1	35	9,595	8	101	3
Laoag	2	603,182	156,201	446,981	280,511	4	54	210,642	3	55	69,869	5	56	25
San Carlos	1	348,427	109,216	239,211	256,826	6	63	146,897	5	83	109,929	2	26	43
San Fernando	3	296,202	102,562	193,640	265,641	5	61	233,125	2	48	32,516	7	85	12
Urdaneta	3	653,809	143,170	510,639	297,650	2	49	205,777	4	59	91,874	4	36	31
Vigan	5	300,909	122,314	178,595	159,692	8	100	93,017	7	98	66,675	6	58	42
CAR		2,174,306	364,687	1,809,619	686,709			513,891			172,817			25
Baguio	1	2,174,306	364,687	1,809,619	686,709	1	12	513,891	1	12	172,817	1	12	25
Region 2		2,711,085	463,810	2,247,275	1,047,071			752,520			294,530			28
Cauayan	4	391,367	214,677	176,690	274,451	3	58	232,477	2	50	41,974	3	76	15
Santiago	1	1,554,527	95,015	1,459,512	492,129	1	17	348,712	1	24	143,418	1	15	29
Tuguegarao	4	765,190	154,117	611,073	280,491	2	55	171,332	3	76	109,138	2	27	39
Region 3		7,446,957	2,276,991	5,169,966	3,900,600			3,077,060			823,540			21
Angeles	1	702,602	152,269	550,333	488,655	2	20	408,109	2	19	80,546	5	41	16
Balanga	5	153,582	32,921	120,661	198,337	9	87	184,200	9	71	14,137	11	99	7
Cabanatuan	1	998,096	531,289	466,807	429,485	4	24	364,267	4	22	65,218	8	59	15
Gapan	5	174,052	35,009	139,043	189,841	10	92	114,563	9	92	75,278	6	50	40
Malolos	2	152,609	61,417	91,192	284,071	7	52	210,627	7	56	73,444	7	52	26
Olongapo	1	2,331,121	530,904	1,800,217	490,030	1	18	376,805	3	21	113,225	3	24	23
Palayan	4	232,022	77,861	154,162	125,168	12	102	107,632	10	95	17,536	10	95	14
San Fernando	3	223,316	67,349	155,967	396,264	6	29	415,662	1	18	(19,399)	12	102	-5
San Jose	2	549,070	143,610	405,461	243,661	8	66	200,663	8	60	42,998	9	74	18
S.J.Del Monte	3	559,547	157,759	401,788	406,534	5	27	264,270	6	37	142,264	1	16	35
Sc.City of Muñoz	5	321,194	116,833	204,361	174,224	11	98	79,257	11	102	94,967	4	32	55
Tarlac	3	1,049,747	369,770	679,977	474,330	3	22	351,004	5	23	123,326	2	19	26
Region 4		13,061,846	3,086,572	9,975,274	5,854,485			4,410,938			1,443,547			25
Antipolo	1	1,290,488	272,862	1,017,626	792,366	4	8	577,048	3	10	215,318	3	6	27
Batangas	1	2,510,166	262,737	2,247,429	835,734	3	7	565,473	4	11	270,261	1	3	32
Calamba	2	1,348,886	270,593	1,078,293	879,899	1	5	634,042	2	8	245,857	2	5	28
Calapan	4	364,363	70,600	293,763	238,266	10	69	189,550	9	69	48,716	9	68	20
Cavite	3	343,008	131,295	211,713	206,597	11	82	164,877	11	79	41,720	12	78	20
Lipa	1	1,078,772	250,960	827,811	488,697	5	19	417,323	5	17	71,374	7	54	15
Lucena	1	408,909	118,338	290,571	363,043	7	33	314,449	7	28	48,595	10	69	13
Puerto Princesa	1	2,608,733	724,664	1,884,069	838,769	2	6	659,194	1	5	179,576	4	11	21
San Pablo	1	945,602	262,398	683,203	400,919	6	28	331,434	6	27	69,485	8	57	17
Tagaytay	3	1,430,657	608,568	822,090	351,599	8	34	236,257	8	46	115,342	5	22	33
Tanauan	3	354,348	66,071	288,277	281,279	9	53	186,997	10	70	94,282	6	34	34
Trece Martires	4	377,913	47,485	330,428	177,316	12	97	134,294	12	86	43,022	11	73	24
Region 5		3,032,506	911,117	2,121,389	1,698,649			1,245,165			453,484			27
Iriga	3	218,527	60,695	157,831	194,111	6	89	180,925	4	74	13,185	7	100	7
Legazpi	1	484,384	100,397	383,987	301,426	2	46	240,016	2	43	61,410	4	61	20
Ligao	5	249,049	37,695	211,355	200,983	4	85	83,909	7	100	117,074	1	21	58
Masbate	5	397,385	211,266	186,119	190,353	7	91	151,614	5	81	38,740	6	79	20
Naga	1	1,138,028	287,703	850,326	350,379	1	35	280,423	1	34	69,955	3	55	20
Sorsogon	5	223,018	77,659	145,359	266,299	3	60	206,777	3	58	59,522	5	63	22
Tabaco	5	322,115	135,703	186,412	195,097	5	88	101,501	6	96	93,597	2	35	48
Region 6		10,621,377	1,891,467	8,729,910	5,104,941			4,120,064			984,878			19
Bacolod	1	1,493,095	207,818	1,285,278	651,647	2	13	614,178	2	9	37,469	12	80	6
Bago	1	882,738	118,435	764,302	328,725	6	40	253,809	6	40	74,916	6	51	23
Cadiz	1	715,153	125,655	589,498	336,612	5	38	294,754	4	31	41,858	11	77	12
Escalante	5	243,669	56,466	187,202	208,266	14	80	148,021	14	82	60,245	7	62	29
Himamaylan	5	390,367	40,464	349,903	225,916	10	75	111,207	16	94	114,709	2	23	51
Iloilo	1	1,350,850	241,266	1,109,584	727,586	1	10	641,503	1	7	86,082	4	39	12
Kabankalan	2	1,098,039	152,275	945,764	380,191	3	30	236,469	7	45	143,722	1	14	38
La Carlota	3	333,678	39,185	294,493	204,191	16	83	181,432	10	73	22,759	15	91	11
Passi	5	387,597	201,992	185,605	210,295	13	79	178,565	11	75	31,730	14	87	15
Roxas	2	480,369	48,047	432,323	258,669	8	62	216,391	9	54	42,269	10	75	16
Sagay	2	550,242	134,153	416,089	315,244	7	41	260,338	5	38	54,906	9	66	17
San Carlos	1	996,523	143,007	853,516	376,653	4	31	299,392	3	30	77,260	5	44	21
Silay	2	563,844	140,272	423,572	238,132	9	70	221,518	8	53	16,615	16	98	7
Sipalay	5	323,032	98,047	224,986	207,790	15	81	119,722	15	91	88,068	3	38	42
Talisay	5	312,013	57,003	255,010	213,156	12	78	178,455	12	76	34,702	13	83	16
Victorias	5	500,167	87,382	412,786	221,879	11	76	164,310	13	80	57,569	8	64	26
Region 7		14,591,373	5,044,720	9,546,653	5,099,317			3,819,811			1,279,505			25
Bais	2	576,449	38,031	538,418	231,167	8	71	183,424	9	72	47,743	9	70	21
Bayawan	5	647,186	148,007	499,178	331,914	4	39	223,569	4	52	108,345	4	28	33
Canlaon	3	508,518	34,055	474,463	150,239	12	101	125,134	11	89	25,105	12	89	17
Cebu	1	7,151,008	3,627,241	3,523,767	1,822,492	1	2	1,359,948	1	2	462,544	1	1	25
Danao	3	455,798	101,494	354,304	229,791	9	72	197,722	5	62	32,069	11	86	14
Dumaguete	2	529,598	72,386	457,212	227,790	10	74	193,553	6	64	34,237	10	84	15
Lapu-lapu	1	1,492,383	325,776	1,166,607	557,915	3	16	447,392	2	15	110,522	3	25	20
Mandaue	1	1,347,479	329,061	1,018,418	603,311	2	14	445,665	3	16	157,646	2	13	26
Tagbilaran	3	587,695	166,855	420,840	256,329	5	64	193,246	7	65	63,083	7	60	25
Talisay	5	527,070	79,502	447,567	241,109	7	68	135,661	10	85	105,448	5	29	44
Tanjay	5	223,617	56,988	166,628	200,686	11	86	123,938	12	90	76,749	6	47	38
Toledo	2	544,573	65,323	479,250	246,572	6	65	190,558	8	68	56,014	8	65	23
Region 8		4,085,932	605,152	3,480,779	1,487,727			1,162,907			324,820			22
Calbayog	1	1,156,435	220,021	936,414	408,385	3	26	391,254	1	20	17,131	4	97	4
Maasin	5	289,355	123,316	166,040	188,775	4	93	93,843	4	97	94,932	2	33	50
Ormoc	1	1,439,535	128,987	1,310,548	481,137	1	21	344,483	2	25	136,654	1	18	28
Tacloban	1	1,200,607	132,829	1,067,777	409,430	2	25	333,326	3	26	76,104	3	48	19
Region 9		5,839,656	767,489	5,072,166	2,185,757			1,575,637			610,120			28
Dapitan	2	337,281	40,973	296,307	229,420	4	73	198,851	4	61	30,568	5	88	13
Dipolog	2	627,249	131,436	495,814	242,313	3	67	206,847	3	57	35,467	4	82	15
Isabela	5	185,654	62,510	123,143	184,894	5	95	89,665	5	99	95,229	2	31	52
Pagadian	1	1,242,201	102,379	1,139,822	310,202	2	43	234,884	2	47	75,318	3	49	24
Zamboanga	1	3,447,271	430,191	3,017,081	1,218,928	1	3	845,390	1	3	373,538	1	2	31
Region 10		6,168,247	1,294,794	4,873,453	2,763,941			2,159,921			604,020			22
Cag. De Oro	1	2,432,696	934,776	1,497,920	1,018,679	1	4	804,765	1	4	213,914	1	7	21
Gingoog	1	830,684	51,487	779,196	314,312	4	42	237,216	5	44	77,097	3	46	25
Malaybalay	3	1,260,661	71,302	1,189,359	430,313	2	23	249,560	4	42	180,753	2	10	42
Oroquieta	3	448,236	61,656	386,580	191,341	6	90	171,141	6	78	20,199	6	94	11
Ozamis	2	459,189	77,600	381,589	304,514	5	44	287,316	2	33	17,198	7	96	6
Tangub	3	382,080	43,647	338,434	164,776	7	99	141,960	7	84	22,816	5	90	14
Valencia	4	354,701	54,325	300,375	340,006	3	37	267,963	3	36	72,043	4	53	21
Region 11		5,426,111	752,122	4,673,989	3,348,749			2,873,013			475,736			14
Davao	1	3,440,202	410,340	3,029,862	2,217,692	1	1	1,968,258	1	1	249,435	1	4	11
Digos	4	248,298	62,565	185,734	279,115	3	57	232,478	3	49	46,637	4	72	17
Island City of S	5	326,003	46,389	279,615	213,777	5	77	192,994	4	66	20,783	5	93	10
Panabo	4	427,912	86,490	341,422	269,188	4	59	191,074	5	67	78,114	3	42	29
Tagum	3	983,695	146,339	837,356	368,978	2	32	288,210	2	32	80,768	2	40	22
Region 12		5,935,507	1,034,052	4,901,455	2,546,653			1,982,592			564,060			22
Cotabato	1	645,521	200,849	444,672	279,895	5	56	257,432	3	39	22,463	6	92	8
Gen. Santos	1	2,066,829	265,932	1,800,898	690,855	2	11	502,493	2	13	188,362	1	9	27
Iligan	1	1,978,934	324,103	1,654,830	789,534	1	9	649,157	1	6	140,377	2	17	18
Kidapawan	4	495,312	116,880	378,431	298,711	3	48	251,770	4	41	46,942	5	71	16
Koronadal	4	477,387	51,540	425,847	284,136	4	51	195,741	5	63	88,395	3	37	31
Tacurong	5	271,524	74,747	196,776	203,522	6	84	126,000	6	88	77,522	4	43	38
Region 13		2,966,563	577,307	2,389,257	1,243,621			1,011,913			231,708			19
Bislig	4	434,583	97,395	337,188	303,604	3	45	226,440	3	51	77,164	2	45	25
Butuan	1	1,809,741	378,540	1,431,200	595,756	1	15	476,919	1	14	118,836	1	20	20
Surigao	2	722,240	101,372	620,869	344,261	2	36	308,554	2	29	35,707	3	81	10
ARMM		565,926	22,319	543,607	184,773			130,362			54,411			29
Marawi	3	565,926	22,319	543,607	184,773	1	96	130,362	1	87	54,411	1	67	29
GRAND TOTAL		87,938,420	19,858,765	68,079,654	39,186,668			30,196,264			8,990,405			23

Difference between totals and sum of components is due to rounding off.

*1 – Regional Ranking
2 – Nationwide Ranking

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2004

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Lot Area 474 sqm.
Floor Area 208 sqm.
Lot 6 Blk 4, Morning Glory cor. Easter Lily St., BF Homes Subd. Phase III Deparo
Minimum Bid Price 2,101,000.00

LOT 2 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 729 sqm.
Lot 3439 Gen. Mascardo Bagong Barrio
Minimum Bid Price 6,640,000.00

LAS PINAS

LOT 3 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 971 sqm.
Lot 62-A, B1, Brgy. Aldana, Padre Sierra Ave., (Quirino Ave. Nat'l. Rd. Pulang Lupa
Minimum Bid Price 11,750,000.00

MAKATI

LOT 4 - CONDOMINIUM
Floor Area 208.22 sqm.
Unit 2705, 27th Floor, Pacific Star Bldg., Gil Puyat Ave., cor Makati Ave
Minimum Bid Price 12,205,000.00

LOT 5 - CONDOMINIUM
Floor Area 202.60 sqm.
Unit 2706, 27th Floor, Pacific Star Bldg., Gil Puyat Ave., cor Makati Ave
Minimum Bid Price 11,949,000.00

MALABON

LOT 6 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area 786 sqm.
Floor Area 555.7 sqm.
No. 1 Dahlia cor. White Lily St., Araneta Village
Minimum Bid Price 6,650,000.00

MUNTINLUPA

LOT 7 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 319 sqm.
Lot 26, Blk 3E, Orange St., Ruby Park, Victoria Homes, Tunasan
Minimum Bid Price 829,000.00

PARANAQUE

LOT 8 - CONDOMINIUM
Floor Area 184.62 sqm.
Unit 1203, Pacific Coast Condo Project, Coastal Rd., Tambo
Minimum Bid Price 3,500,000.00

LOT 9 - CONDOMINIUM
Floor Area 184.62 sqm.
Unit 1703, Pacific Coast Condo Project, Coastal Rd., Tambo
Minimum Bid Price 3,500,000.00

LOT 10 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 749 sqm.
Lot 1, Abalone St., Jaleville Subd., Brgy. San Dionisio
Minimum Bid Price 3,969,000.00

PASIG

LOT 11 - CONDOMINIUM
Floor Area 167.[illegible]
Unit 804 [illegible] Condominium, Pearl D[illegible] Center
Minimum Bid Price [illegible]

QUEZON CITY

LOT 12 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area 400 sqm.
Floor Area various
No. 28, Pisces St., Carmel V Subd., Tandang Sora
Minimum Bid Price 5,800,000.00

LOT 13 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area 1,125 sqm.
Floor Area various
#191 Kaboaan Ave., Quirino District
Minimum Bid Price 29,217,000.00

VALENZUELA

LOT 14 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area 1,728 sqm.
Floor Area 100 sqm.
Lot 6-B-4-B-2, Coloong Rd. I, Brgy. Coloong
Minimum Bid Price 3,001,000.00

LOT 15 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 9,037 sqm.
No. 3, San Andres Canumay
Minimum Bid Price 25,881,000.00

LOT 16 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area 13,679 sqm.
Floor Area 4,632.68 sqm.
No. 270 (Old #473) McArthur Hi-way, Dalandan
Minimum Bid Price 39,358,000.00

RIZAL

LOT 17 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 400 sqm.
Lot 12, Blk 21, Road Lot 9-A, Village East Executive Homes, Bo. San Isidro, Angono
Minimum Bid Price 446,000.00

LOT 18 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 472 sqm.
Lot 1 Blk 5, Teakwood cor. Oakwood St., Cottonwood Heights, Bo. San Isidro
Minimum Bid Price 1,805,000.00

LOT 19 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 404 sqm.
Lot 2 Blk 5, Teakwood, Cottonwood Heights, Bo. San Isidro, Antipolo
Minimum Bid Price 1,476,000.00

LOT 20 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 287 sqm.
Lot 3 Blk 5, Teakwood, Cottonwood Heights, Bo. San Isidro, Antipolo
Minimum Bid Price 1,049,000.00

LOT 21 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 274 sqm.
Lot 20 Blk. 4, Teakwood cor. Oakwood St., Cottonwood Heights, Bo. San Isidro
Minimum Bid Price 1,048,000.00

LOT 22 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 360 sqm.
Lot 16 Blk 5, Metro View Ridge Estate Subd., Antipolo
Minimum Bid Price 1,260,000.00

LOT 23 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 450 sqm.
Lot 17 Blk 5, Metro View Ridge Estate Subd., Antipolo
Minimum Bid Price 1,575,000.00

LOT 24 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 390 sqm.
Lot 12 Blk 6, Metro View Ridge Estate Subd., Antipolo
Minimum Bid Price 1,365,000.00

LOT 25 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 455 sqm.
Lot 13 Blk 6, Metro View Ridge Estate Subd., Antipolo
Minimum Bid Price 1,593,000.00

LOT 26 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 850 sqm.
Km. 23, Ortigas Ave., Ext., San Isidro, Taytay
Minimum Bid Price 8,415,000.00

[illegible]

LOT 27 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area 324 sqm.
Floor Area 191.22 sqm.
No. 3 Alpha St., St. Peter Subd., Alangilan
Minimum Bid Price 1,575,000.00

LOT 28 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area 294 sqm.
Floor Area various
D. Silang St., Poblacion
Minimum Bid Price 6,594,000.00

BULACAN

LOT 29 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area 24,525 sqm.
Floor Area 121 sqm.
Bo. Tiaong, Guiguinto
Minimum Bid Price 7,665,000.00

LOT 30 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area 240 sqm.
Floor Area 170 sqm.
No. 82 Violeta Ave., Violeta Subd., Bo. Tabang, Guiguinto
Minimum Bid Price 1,428,000.00

LOT 31 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 7,524 sqm.
Lot 1502, Along Guyong, Sta. Maria de Pandi
Minimum Bid Price 9,276,000.00

LOT 32 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 199 sqm.
Lot 43 Blk. 35, Tanguile St., Town & Country North Executive Village, McArthur Highway, Bo. Abangan
Minimum Bid Price 597,000.00

LOT 33 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 1,997 sqm.
Lot 5216-B-1, Bo. Malandang Sit. Pandi
Minimum Bid Price 1,334,000.00

LOT 34 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 301 sqm.
Lot 33 Blk. 51, Dao cor. Palm Sts., Town & Country North Exec. Village PH I, Bo. Abangan Norte, Marilao
Minimum Bid Price 903,000.00

LOT 35 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 26,580 sqm.
Lot 1268, Along Sta. Maria-SJDM, Prov'l. Rd. Bo. Dulong Bayan, SJDM
Minimum Bid Price 11,296,000.00

LOT 36 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 41,128 sqm.
Lot 840, Along Sta. Maria-SJDM, Prov'l. Rd. Bo. Dulong Bayan, SJDM
Minimum Bid Price 17,489,000.00

LOT 37 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 10,000 sqm.
Lot 2-C, Bo. Perez & Bahay Pare, Meycauayan
Minimum Bid Price 28,000,000.00

LOT 38 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 1,262 sqm.
Lot 10 Blk. 2, Globe Asiatique Buss. Park, McArthur Hi-way, Bo. Wakas, Bocaue
Minimum Bid Price 2,019,000.00

LOT 39 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 1,135 sqm.
Lot 11 Blk. 2, Globe Asiatique Buss. Park, McArthur Highway, Bo. Wakas, Bocaue, Bulacan
Minimum Bid Price 1,816,000.00

LOT 40 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 12,870 sqm.
Lot 2602-B, Bo. Masusu, Pandi
Minimum Bid Price 2,368,000.00

CAVITE

LOT 41 - CONDOMINIUM
Floor Area 222 sqm.
Cluster C-4/Unit 13, Ocean Villas, Puerto Azul, Ternate, Cavite
Minimum Bid Price 3,330,000.00

LOT 42 - CONDOMINIUM
Floor Area 214 sqm.
Cluster D-3/Unit 21, Ocean Villas, Puerto Azul, Ternate
Minimum Bid Price 3,210,000.00

LOT 43 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 187 sqm.
Lot 3 Blk. 1, Southwood Villas, Saktan, Dasmariñas
Minimum Bid Price 500,000.00

LOT 44 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 187 sqm.
Lot 4 Blk. 1, Southwood Villas, Saktan, Dasmariñas
Minimum Bid Price 506,000.00

LOT 45 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 176 sqm.
Lot 11 Blk. 3, Southwood Villas, Saktan, Dasmariñas
Minimum Bid Price 477,000.00

LOT 46 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 206 sqm.
Lot 12 Blk. 3, Southwood Villas, Saktan, Dasmariñas, Cavite
Minimum Bid Price 558,000.00

LOT 47 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 120 sqm.
Lot 9 Blk 212, Metro Gate Subd., Treco Martirez
Minimum Bid Price 202,000.00

LOT 48 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 120 sqm.
Lot 16 Blk 212, Metro Gate Subd., Treco Martirez
Minimum Bid Price 202,000.00

LOT 49 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 120 sqm.
Lot 17 Blk 212, Metro Gate Subd., Treco Martirez
Minimum Bid Price 202,000.00

LOT 50 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 120 sqm.
Lot 18 Blk 212, Metro Gate Subd., Trece Martirez
Minimum Bid Price 202,000.00

LOT 51 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 120 sqm.
Lot 19 Blk 212, Metro Gate Subd., Trece Martirez
Minimum Bid Price 202,000.00

LOT 52 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 120 sqm.
Lot 20 Blk 212, Metro Gate Subd., Trece Martirez
Minimum Bid Price 202,000.00

LOT 53 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 325 sqm.
Lot 13 Blk 31, Brgy. Quintana, Trece Martirez
Minimum Bid Price 483,000.00

LOT 54 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 300 sqm.
Lot 15 Blk 31, Brgy. Quintana, Trece Martirez
Minimum Bid Price 446,000.00

LOT 55 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 407 sqm.
Lot 42 Blk 107, (inner lot), Birmingham St., Eagleridge Golf and Residential Estate, Amadeo Rd., Gen. Trias
Minimum Bid Price 916,000.00

LOT 56 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 384 sqm.
Lot 45 Blk 107, (inner lot), Birmingham St., Eagleridge Golf and Residential Estate, Amadeo Rd., Gen. Trias
Minimum Bid Price 864,000.00

LOT 57 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 392 sqm.
Lot 44 Blk 107, (inner lot), Birmingham St., Eagleridge Golf and Residential Estate, Amadeo Rd., Gen. Trias
Minimum Bid Price 882,000.00

LOT 58 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 854 sqm.
Lot 20 Blk 59 (fairway lot with share), Oxford St., Eagleridge Golf and Residential Estate, Amadeo Rd., Gen. Trias
Minimum Bid Price 1,737,000.00

LOT 59 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 550 sqm.
Lot 22 Blk 59 (fairway lot with share), Woodstock St., Eagleridge Golf and Residential Estate, Amadeo Rd., Gen. Trias
Minimum Bid Price 1,493,000.00

LOT 60 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 580 sqm.
Lot 30 Blk 59 (fairway lot with share), Oxford St., Eagleridge Golf and Residential Estate, Amadeo Rd., Gen. Trias
Minimum Bid Price 1,447,000.00

[illegible]

LOT 61 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area 324 sqm.
Floor Area 297 sqm.
No. 8 Ortega St., San Vicente, San Pedro
Minimum Bid Price 1,420,000.00

LOT 62 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area 240 sqm.
Floor Area 210 sqm.
#157 Country Drive St., Country Homes Subd., Barrio Soro-soro, Biñan
Minimum Bid Price 1,260,000.00

LOT 63 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 194 sqm.
Lot 7-A Blk 1, Laurelville I Subd., San Rafael, San Pablo City
Minimum Bid Price 523,000.00

LOT 64 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 381 sqm.
Lot 1, Bo. San Roque, San Pablo City
Minimum Bid Price 457,000.00

LOT 65 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area 500 sqm.
Lot 17775-C, Bo. San Roque, San Pablo City
Minimum Bid Price 600,000.00

BACOLOD CITY

LOT 66 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area 222 sqm.
Floor Area 668 sqm.
Lot 2 & 3, Mabini St., Bacolod City
Minimum Bid Price 8,162,000.00

ADDITIONAL

LOT 67 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area 400 sqm.
Floor Area Various
40 Caragay St., San Francisco del Monte, QUEZON CITY
Minimum Bid Price 3,200,000.00

LOT 68 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area 234 sqm.
Floor Area 146 sqm.
10 Biugness St., Doña Andrea Vill. I Rosario, PASIG
Minimum Bid Price 2,000,000.00

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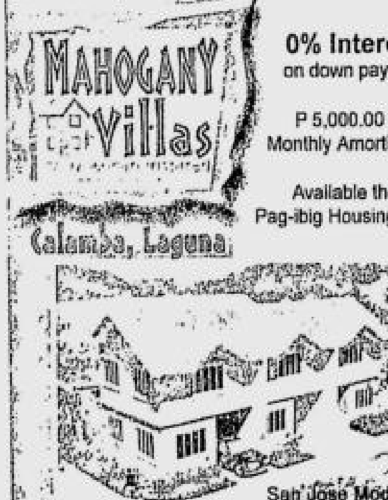

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Sta. Ana, Pateros, M.M.
•49SQM H&L
G. de Borja St., Aguho, Pateros
•H&L 2-STY 38.64SQM
Urrutia St., Mariag-Quirino, QC
•420SQM LOT Riverview
Drive, Bluandge B. QC
•63SQM w/vault & garage
Gen. Santos St., Bicutan
•49SQM 2-STY TWNHSE
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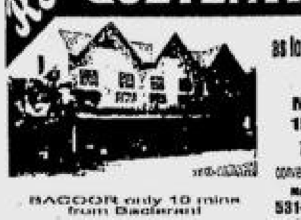

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MKT NR AYALA
BnewTwnhse/3stry/3br-2-2 1/2tb/grge P3.285M up 8903461 loc 34

RC4AR04 39.9
#254207.eps
RAMON DOLAR

MANDALUYONG

Rush, Bnew,3M / Cash (2BR ,2T&B, Mds Rm & Pkng) 09192189817

PARANAQUE

BRAND NEW 3STRY 7121435

PASIG

1.3M 3Yrs No Int 40sq.m Nr Mktl & Ort 0917-9749397

1.6M ORTIGAS AVE RFO
P13T-UP or 10% DP move-in
NO DP/0% INT, 24BR, Rent to own
0919-4407826/514-0055/472-7193

1.6M ORTIGAS AVE., Resort-Type, 1st Class 2-4BR, P12T mo./No DP/0% Bess • 0917-5234223

QUEZON CITY

CUBAO P1.5M 5YRS TO PAY No Interest Move-In 9126976

Valencia Hills 1BR 634-1212

LAST 1 BR
Condotel 38.5 SM
Regalia Cubao
2.6+M Direct Buyers
only 0917-5582479

LOT

MAKATI

McKinley Hills 634-1212

PASIG

Rosario 1500 @3000m² 6453731

QUEZON CITY

Xaviervil 360m² @23T/m² 6453731

RIZAL

Forest Hills 453m² Antipolo P1.6M Neg. 531-6771 0917-2070727

PROVINCIAL

★100% TAGAYTAY ★
240m²-up 3,750/m² 135T D/P 6T Mo Best Loc nr Taal Vista 6609372

OTHER AREAS

SUBIC Adj Hway/Resort 29HA P120/m² neg Direct Buyers RUSH 6356003 / 6337371

LAGUNA

Residential Lot For Sale
146m² Southville Binan Laguna
727-7216/18 • 0917-8128973

FARM/FISHPEN/RAWLANDS

NUSA DUA FARM ESTATE
NO DOWN With Title Glocy
714-4916 • 0920-2308106

RUSH SALE PIGGERY FARM GOOD FOR 500 SOW-50000 PIGS CALL 7277216/18•09178128973

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

CONDO/TWNHSE

CAVITE

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

HOUSE

MANDALUYONG

2-Sty 4BR P10T/mo 620-4721

MARIKINA

VISTA VALLEY 3BR 2TB
Garage • Call Jo 941-3237

CONDO/TWNHSE

MAKATI

BNew Condo Nr D'Fort/Makati 2BR with Parking 12T/mo. 0916-4617642, 628-2665 -Mon

MANILA

1BR 65sq.m FF Very Nice Malate Near Remedios 17T 631-0752

BAYVIEW TOWER II 3BR FULLY FURNISHED OVERLOOKING ROXAS BLVD READY TO OCCUPY CALL 3525090

PASIG

Ortigas/Makati 2-3BR P25-65T/mo. T-6337601-03

PARC RYL 1BR FF 4121825

QUEZON CITY

2BR 2TB Grg w/ attic 17 North Rd nr Edsa 7253023;7237351

MANILA

CONDO 2BR w/grge 5636296

nr LaSalle St.Scho 4042186

IBB

Marketing Assistant, Philippines

The International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB), a part of the United States Government, is looking for a Marketing Assistant in Manila to perform a wide variety of routine marketing related activities. The IBB includes the Voice of America radio and television service, one of the largest newsgathering organizations in the world and a leader in providing news and entertainment programs around the globe.

Applicant MUST have an in-depth knowledge of the media environment in the Philippines; 3 years experience working for a broadcast station; excellent interpersonal and negotiation skills; be able to travel occasionally; be fluent in spoken and written English; be able to work independently with little supervision. Applicant must be mature, resourceful, have initiative, etc.

Responsibilities: Assist Regional Marketing Director (RMO) in Bangkok; Maintain close contacts with regional/U.S. IBB offices; Update IBB affiliate database; Monitor and research media developments in the Philippines; monitor VOA broadcast on various stations in the Philippines; arrange for equipment installation; write weekly reports; negotiate rebroadcast agreements & perform other duties as assigned.

Fax your detailed resumé and letter to Joyce Ngoh at 66-2-205-5707, send by email to jmngoh@ibb-bkk.org or mail it to *IBB, The Millennia Bldg., Rm 1501, 62 Langsuan Rd., Bangkok 10330, Thailand.* Applications must be received by close of business on September 24, 2004.

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

APARTMENT

PASIG

2 BDRMS UP/DN 641-5826

BO. CAPITOLYO 6331040 TETA

ROOM & BOARD

Chin. Gen P200 7118679

•FURNISH PASAY 8872865•

P200 Sucat Pque 8257524

BUSINESS RENTAL

100sqm Q.C. SPACE
with Kitchen, Very reasonable RENT Call Socorro Wed-Sun
931-9893 • 0918-5688837

85 SQM WITH PARK 900 UN AVE ERMITA TEL 521-1114

AYALA AVE 8181696/7586

Dental Clinic For Sale/Lease Rm224 Atrium Bldg Makati •811-4071/823-6047•

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

LOAN & MORTGAGE

2% W/O TAKING CAR 3677523/24

BUSINES DOCTOR 524-3197

OFFICE SPACE FOR RENT

Jollibee Plaza 70m² 4121825

Prestige 97m²@ 30T FF4121825

VVI ofc/res 168m² 28T 4121825

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE OR RENT

CONDO/TWHSE/ FOR SALE/RENT

CONDO FOR SALE/RENT
BAYVIEW INTL. TOWER 3
Roxas Blvd Pque. Semi Furnished 4br+maids, 1-Parking. Sale P7.5M / Rent P65Kpm + dues. Neg. Contact 8934110 or 0927 8904030

TransCo
National Transmission Corporation

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Date September 17, 2004
Contract No. BCMD.2004-010

1. Contract Name : Design, Supply, Delivery, Integration with existing Management Systems, Database Configuration, and Commissioning of Integrated Telecom Network Management System (ITNMS).
2. The works and services to be done by the successful bidder under this Contract shall consist of design, supply, delivery, installation, integration with existing Telecom Network Management Systems, database configuration, and commissioning of an Integrated Telecom Management System (ITNMS) to include all the necessary installation materials, devices, and related accessories. Factory integration testing and corresponding technical training for Transco personnel shall also be part of the requirement.
3. The Approved Budget for the Contract to be bid from the Internal Cash Generation of TransCo is P28,000,000.00.
4. Application for Eligibility and Bidding is open to Filipino manufacturers, suppliers/dealers, distributors who have the legal, technical and financial requisites of the contract to be bid
5. Application for Eligibility shall be evaluated using "PASS/FAIL" criteria and only Eligible Bidders shall be included by TransCo in the bidding. All bids equal to or lower than the Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid shall be evaluated based on the responsiveness of the supplier's offer to the contract under bidding subject to Post qualification before an award is made. Bid Prices submitted higher than the Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid shall be rejected and returned outright.
6. Eligibility & Bid Documents will be available for issuance on **September 20, 2004 at the Bids and Contract Management Department**, Ground Floor, Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City 1104, Telefax No.: 921-2308 upon presentation of letter of intent and a payment of non-refundable fee of P5,000.00.
7. Deadline for submission of duly accomplished Application for Eligibility Forms, statements and Bid Proposals (Technical and Price) shall be on **November 3, 2004, 1:30 p.m.** at the De La Paz Function Room, Training Center, Power Center, Quezon Avenue cor. BIR Road TransCo, Diliman, Quezon City, Metro Manila.

   Pre-Bid Conference shall be on **October 11, 2004** at the time and venue to be announced later.
8. Manufacturers, suppliers/dealers, distributors not yet included in the TransCo's List of registered Suppliers/Contractors, who wish to participate in the public bidding, in order to facilitate eligibility check/screening, are requested to register with the registration office mentioned above by submitting the following basic requirements, duly notarized, which should be maintained current and updated at least once a year. A certificate of Registration will be issued to suppliers/contractors upon approval
   - Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) business name registration or Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) registration certificate, as appropriate;
   - Mayor's permit and/or municipal license for the current year;
   - Copy of Taxpayer's Identification Number (TIN) issued by BIR or Copy of BIR registration showing TIN;
   - Notarized statement of the prospective bidder that it is not "blacklisted" or barred from bidding by any government agency, office or corporation;
   - Audited financial statements, stamped "received" by the BIR or its duly accredited and authorized institutions, for the immediately preceding calendar year, showing, among others, the prospective bidder's total and current assets and liabilities inclusive of Income Tax Return and Receipt;

   For foreign bidders in Joint Venture, the required documents applicable to entities doing business in the Philippines shall be substituted by the appropriate equivalent documents issued by foreign bidder's country, which documents shall be duly acknowledged and/or authenticated by the Philippine Consulate thereat.

   Note: Prospective bidders are allowed to submit the above requirements together with their Eligibility Forms and Documents during the deadline for the submission of Eligibility requirements and Bid proposals (Technical and Price).
9. TransCo reserves the right to reject any application for Eligibility or all bids without offering any reason, waive any required formality therein, and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government.
10. The Contract to be bid shall be governed by the Provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations.
11. Additional information shall be furnished upon request. All communications should be addressed to the undersigned at the aforementioned address

(Sgd.) DOMINADOR S. GEONZON
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - Sept. 20 & 27, 2004)

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE OR RENT

APARTMENT FOR SALE/RENT

APT P4,500-7,000 Manila Bedspacers 1,500 above 561-0960 look for Joyce/Aj

OTHER REAL ESTATE

REALTORS/SEMINAR

BROKER'S REVIEW 4382966

TRANSPORTATION FOR SALE

CARS

BMW

'94 BMW 2-Tone M/T 316I P500T 09274907797

FORD

US FORD EXPLORER 4x4 230HP, BLACK-METALLIC '97 model, 69T Kms., Well Maintained • Tel.# 775-0548

HONDA

01 CRV Ltd 42km 09178988814

99 Civic 1.6 VTi A/T P370T 62Tkm 252-0401 • 480-0249

'99 CRV 4X4 558T M/T 7416160

HYUNDAI

'03 Matrix A/T 1.6 Gas Showroom Cond. 09274907797

MITSUBISHI

'97 GALANT 350K 913-2015

GLXI 95" NOTHING TO FIX SPORTY LUK MUGS 272-7813

TOYOTA

86'MR2 811-4453 589-9366

OTHER CAR BRANDS

Pajero Land Cruiser Surf Lite-Town-Hi Ace Vanette Estima Prado Serena Elf Canter etc T-in Finance ok 8328659 / 09202981098

BUSES/TRUCKS

5 Units IH Tractor w/Hi-Bed Trailer L-50ft • 0918-9249485

TRANSPORTATION FOR RENT

CARS FOR RENT

BENZ Jaguar Lincoln 6825922

CarsVans CoasterBus 422-9296

CARS/VANS/BRIDAL 8969956

Cheap Van Rental 9330311

Cheap Van Rental 9330311

P800/L3 9136710 / 4333682

Toyco U Drive w/ Driver All Kinds Cars Van Revo Dly. Wk Mo. Rental 8023021-22

ABC RENT A CAR
NEW CARS & VANS
PAJERO • HI-ACE
REVO • VIOS • ALTIS • STAREX
CRLA • CRV • LYNX • 536-8822
303-9789 • 426-2278 • 426-4084

CAR LOAN

1.5% Fast Car Loan 3677523/24

1.5% Easy Carloan 7815352/55

1.5% Fast Car Loan 6560140

1.5% w/oTaking Car 3732081-82

1.5% w/oTaking Car 3650974/75

1.5% w/oTaking Car 7228942-43

•1HR Fast Car Loan 7125202•

2% w/o Taking Car 7262780

2% w/o taking car 7880183-84

2% w/oTaking Car 8870490/95

2% w/oTaking Car 7221021

2% w/oTaking Car 8966630/33

2% w/oTaking Car 8959454

2% w/out taking car 6567685

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

BUY/SELL

CAP/PRUD PLANS GIE 7800106

EDUC'L PLAN Dang 8061574

HEALTH & BEAUTY

Control weight now 3758988

LOSE WT NOW 09178274640

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

WANTED TO BUY

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

WANTED TO BUY

WANTED TO BUY

LPG STORAGE TANK

30 to 50 Tons Capacity

Please contact cel. nos.

0917-514-2418
0917-791-5829

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

INSURANCE

Educ/Pnsion Plan 0917-8997547

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

YAMAHA GRAND & UPRIGHT
ELITE PIANO CENTER
Almost New:TERMS-7213124

PETS

DOG TRAINER 0919-3419012

Dog Trainer 0919-2050952

WANTED TO BUY

BUY • SELL • PAWN
SWISS WATCHES
AGENCIA de MAKATI-4567017
SECONDO AYALA CENTER-8940282
OPEN MONDAY TO SATURDAY
'PROFESSIONAL & CREDIBLE'
LOW 5% INTEREST

Best Deal in Town
BUY • SELL • PAWN
ROLEX+OTHERS
DIAMONDS/JEWELRY
Repair / Polish Any watch
MANILA WATCH EXCHANGE
Hyatt • 804-0484 / 834-2886
Mkti 893-0618 • G'hills 724-4374

WE BUY AT HIGH PRICE
ROLEX
5646593 5897041
5633742 0917-8473744

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

BUYING ROLEX
Other WATCHES, BEST PRICE
0917-8142309 • 7269687
7220433 • 4123543

PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE OF LOSS

Lost ACR Issued To Mr Troy Don Franklin By Bureau Of Immigration On October 17, 2004 Makati City,
PDI- Sept. 20 -24, 2004

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

CHRISTMAS is nr Invest P8880 earn 20T/mo up 09178354797

earnextranow.com code:atb2004 8531008 09178901851 Arlene

EARN P10T up/week - HOW? share d bisnez 0921-5914739

Inc Income PT upto 20T/mo3732531

NEED INCOME? 2910770

Need Income? No Problem! 7126374

RTW Consign 09167940002

BUKIDNON FORESTS INCORPORATED
(A Subsidiary of the Natural Resources Development Corporation)
Assisted by the New Zealand Government
BFI Compound, Sumpong, Malaybalay City, Bukidnon
Telefax : (088) 813-2037 / (088) 221-2115 • Phone : (088) 813-2654 / (088) 221-2175
E-mail : bfibuk@mibly.philcom.com.ph

BID NO. 05
16 September 2004

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID FOR THE BENGUET PINE LOGS WITH APPROXIMATE VOLUME OF 6,000 CU.M. IN VARIOUS LOG GRADES

Bukidnon Forests, Incorporated (BFI) invites interested parties in the bidding of various Benguet Pine logs in lump with an approximate volume of 6,000 cubic meters with corresponding estimated price of Ten Million One Hundred Twelve Thousand Two Hundred Eighty Pesos (P10,112,280.00) loaded on truck at BFI log landing site. The total estimated price will be adjusted subject to actual scaling.

Submission of Letter of Intent & Eligibility Requirements will be accepted until September 22, 2004.

Eligibility	September 23, 2004
Pre-Bid Conference & Site Visit	September 28, 2004
Submission & Dropping of Bids	October 01, 2004 until 1:30 p.m.
Opening of Bids	October 01, 2004 @ 2:00 p.m. BFI Training Center, BFI Compound, Sumpong, Malaybalay City

Qualified bidders may obtain bid documents from the BAC Secretariat upon payment of non-refundable amount of P1,500.00 per set. Those already eligible please furnish us copy of Wood Processing Permit (WPP) and you may not submit the other usual eligibility documents. For more information, please inquire at the BFI Office, Sumpong, Malaybalay City.

GRADES	DIAMETER CLASS (cm)	AGENCY PRICE PICK-UP PRICE /cu.m. (Loaded on Truck)	APPROXIMATE VOLUME (m³)	PRODUCT DESCRIPTIONS
A	30 up	P 2,865.00	480	Without knots/visible defects
A2	30 up	P 2,600.00	1,680	With knots less than 10 cm
B	26 up	P 1,815.00	960	Straight with knots less than 10 cm
C	26 up	P 1,228.00	60	Knots less than 10 cm
S	20 up	P 1,100.00	960	Straight with knots less than 10 cm
SS	16-18	P 850.00	480	Straight with knots
R	14 below	P 450.00	1,200	Big diameter with 40% defects
P1	15-17	P 2,900.00 average price P 3,050.00	180	Electric post light weight
P2	18-20	P 3,200		Standard

The BFI reserves the right to reject any or all bid proposals, to waive any informalities or defects found therein and may accept only such bids which, in its judgment, is deemed most advantageous to BFI.

(Sgd.) DENNIS N. RAMIREZ
Admin.R&SS Manager/BAC Chairman
NOTED:
(Sgd.) MANUEL M. CASIÑO
V/P General Manager

(PDI – September 18, 19 & 20, 2004)

VICTORIAS
MILLING COMPANY, INC.

NOTICE OF SUGAR BIDDING

VICTORIAS MILLING COMPANY, INC. with Millsite Office at Victorias City, Negros Occidental invites all interested bidders to participate in the **bidding of 73,162.97 LKG Domestic "B" VMC Raw Sugar** intended for refining. Refined sugar will be withdrawn from the mill.

Interested bidders shall **submit** the following documents to our **Makati** or **Millsite Office** on or before the scheduled bidding date:

1. Original and one (1) Certified photocopy of sugar trading license/SRA Registration
2. Office Address, Telephone Number and sketch of location of business office of the Sugar Trading Firm
3. Duly notarized Special Power of Attorney from the single proprietor or Board Resolution from the Secretary/Chairman certifying that the representative is presently connected with the entity and is authorized to represent the firm in the bidding and all activities pertinent thereto.

The **bidding** shall be conducted **at the VMC Makati Office** located at **9126 Sultana corner Honradez Streets, Barangay Olympia, Makati City** on **September 23**, 2004 at **3:00 P.M.**

Floor price shall be announced before opening the sealed bids. VMC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and accept only such offers, which in its judgment are most reasonable and advantageous to the company.

For more details, please call our Millsite Office, Sugar Marketing Division, c/o Ms. **Terry Cequiña** at Tel. No. **(034) 399-3382; 09189124130** or our Makati Office, c/o Ms. **Lina Pilla** at Tel. No. **(02) 896-3425; (02) 896-0381**.

(Sgd.) ABELARDO E. BUGAY
OIC & Senior Vice President

(PDI-Sept 20 & 21 2004)

We are a fast growing regional company specializing in network & security infrastructure. Our targeted market segments are service providers & large enterprises. We are looking for experienced & competent individuals for the following positions:

Sales Engineers / Account Managers

You will be responsible for selling the company's product and services into the respective assigned territory to achieve required sales quota. As a customer focused and technically competence professional, you should ideally be having 2 to 3 years of Enterprise and/or Service Provider sales experience and be at ease with general TCP/IP Network and Security technology.

Product Consultant

You will be responsible for selling the company's network and security product. Your job will involve product and solution presentation and proposal preparation including pricing information. You will find yourself to be in a vital technical and commercial role to assist in the overall sales process. As a customer focused and technically competence professional, you should ideally be having 2 to 3 years of relevant experience and be at ease with general TCP/IP Network and Security Infrastructure.

Channels Manager/Executives

You will be selling company's full range of solutions and services through distribution channel. A self-starter having 2 to 5 years relevant experience in equivalent channel sales capacity, you should have an existing networks and contacts of resellers, system integrators and e-business solution providers.

Interested applicants may send their comprehensive resumé with picture to hermie@netpoleons.com

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INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

Seeking Pinoy Entreprenuer to Expand Biz Globally. Sincerely invite you to our Int'l Biz Preview held in Makati • Training Supervisor 0927-7114699

BUSINESS FOR SALE

RESTAURANT FOR SALE FULLY EQUIPPED T#801-72-03 Cell No. (0917)5398108

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

MALE

Taxi Driver 4542496/4533222
Auto Mechanic / Electrician

FEMALE

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT Female,25-30 yrs old,graduate,computer literate,Ms Word,Excel and Email,work in Makati,Fax resume to Ms.Samantha at 8956582.

TELEMARKETERS 718-0736

$$ TRAVEL & MONEY $$ 8953427

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

MALE/FEMALE

BSP•BSN•PT•MT
Any Allied Health Grads up to P45T/ Mo! 8922818

CAREGIVER T-5280747

CONSTRUCTION FIRM
- NEEDS -
• CIVIL ENGINEERS
• INSTRUMENT MAN
• ACCOUNTANTS
•GEODETIC ENGINEER
• RODMAN
•BOOKKEEPER
Exp. Relevant License & Computer literate a must. Pls. Send Resume @ P.O. Box 100 c/o Phil. Daily Inquirer 5th Flr. Bldg-B SM Megamall

EARN HIGHEST COMMISSION ON EDU / PEN PLANS CALL PRYCE PLANS CALL CENTER MLA T-897-5916 / 5902 CDO (08822)727-945 LIPA (043) 756-1916 CEBU (032) 231-5654 BACOLOD (034) 435-0011 loc 11 DAVAO (082) 221-9034 loc. 402/403

Got a Phone? Earn up to P30,000/mo. Flexible Hrs w/Travel Opp. 8927828

OFC MKTG STAFF 18/45 y/o Coll Level/Grad w/w/o exp START ASAP 9958582 Mariel

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

MALE/FEMALE

•JOB HIRING!•
Real Estate Consultants Age 18 Up M/F College Grad. w/ or w/o Sales Exp. Earn P8T/mo. Allownz P25-50T Comm. H/Car Plan Send Resume w/2x2 Photo Call 816-0577 • 673-5820

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

MALE/FEMALE

OFFICE STAFF 09196913491 VEA

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

870 SQM Lot w/improvements. Ideal for motor shop warehouse & garage Call: 8908380 / 8955532 Heidi

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

PHARMACY • CONVENIENCE STORE w/coffee shop good location in Mkti nr banks, church, condo ofcs 8908380 / 8955532 Heidi

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THORESEN & CO., (BANGKOK) LTD.

Thoresen is a Bangkok based shipping group, quoted on the stock exchange of Thailand, and involved in ship owning, operating, agency, brokering, stevedoring, forwarding and port operations. Our growing fleet consists of 43 bulkers and tween deckers in the 15-52,000 dwt size range. For more information about the group, please visit our website at www.thoresen.com. For our **Maritime Operations Division** in Bangkok, we are seeking applications from Philippine nationals for the following positions:

MARINE AND ENGINEER SUPERINTENDENTS

(1 POSITION EACH)

Objective – *to achieve technically sound, professionally competent, safe, clean and competitive vessel operation, providing the best cargo care every single day of the year.*

The position will involve the standard superintendency role in handling 8-10 vessels with Philippine crew sailing in regional and liner trades as well as worldwide dry bulk trades.

The successful candidate will be a minimum of 30 years old with relevant superintendent experience and will be enthusiastic about working in Thailand on a single posting status.

Salary/Benefit Package will be commensurate with experience and qualifications.

For further details please contact:
Mr. Clinton De Souza
E-Mail: ades@thoresen.com

Send application with CV and recent photograph to:
Thoresen & Co., (Bangkok) Ltd.
Attn: Mr. Pongsak Kanchanakpan
General Manager, Group Personnel and Administration
GPO Box 1587, Bangkok 10501, Thailand
Tel: +66 2 250-0569 Fax: +66 2 655-3906

Manila Representative Office:
Norteam Shipping Services, Inc.
Suite 201 ITC Bldg. 337 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave.,
Makati City 1200
POEA LIC No. 192-SB-030804-R
Phn: (632) 8999445 / 8907746
Fax: (632) 8969004 / 8969006

For Manpower Pooling Only
No Fees to be collected

DBP
Development Bank of the Philippines

INVITATION TO BID

The Development Bank of the Philippines will receive sealed bids on September 29, 2004, 2:00 p.m., Auditorium of the DBP Head Office, Sen. Gil Puyat Ave. cor. Makati Ave., Makati City for the following properties on CASH BASIS:

CODE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	MINIMUM BID
REAL ESTATE			
MANILA			
AM-CP-242	No. 15 Highland Drive, Blue Ridge Subd., Quezon City	858.80 m² residential lot (TCT No. N-251920) w/ 2-storey bldg.	P 9,300,000.00
BAC-10	Lot 2247-A-9, Interior Maytubig St., San Rafael District, Pasay City	405.40 m² residential lot (TCT No. T-143002) w/ 2-storey bldg.	P 7,702,600.00
BAC-11	Lot 2247-A-10, Interior Maytubig St., San Rafael District, Pasay City	398.30 m² vacant residential lot (TCT No. T-143001)	P 7,567,700.00
BAC-12	Lot 2247-A-8, Interior Maytubig St., San Rafael District, Pasay City	327.20 m² vacant residential lot (TCT No. T-143000)	P 6,216,800.00
CWB-7	L-26 B N-8, No. 19 Road 7, Pagasa, Quezon City	240 m² residential/commercial lot (TCT No. N-209559) w/ 3-storey res'l/factory/office bldg.	P 6,187,500.00
AM-PY-243a	No. 6 Balete Drive, Quezon City	2-units, 2-storey condominium units (CCT Nos. N-24864 & N-24865), 130 m² each (BCA-G & H)	P 2,512,000.00
AM-PY-243b	-do-	1-unit, 2-storey condominium unit (CCT No. N-24867),150.60 m² (BCA-F)	P 1,512,960.00
AM-MC-244	57 Faustino St., Lawang Bato (Punturin), Valenzuela City	150 m² residential lot (TCT No. V-59978) w/ shop, factory bldgs. & 2-units candle moulding machines	P 374,100.00
AM-PY-220		228 m² residential lot (TCT No. 334416)	P 383,040.00
BATANGAS			
AM-JA-245	D. Silang St., Batangas City	159 m² commercial lot (TCT No. T-53084)	P 3,180,000.00
BULACAN			
AM-PY-246	Bgy. Matang Tubig, Baliuag	3 parcels of lots (TCT Nos. T-162317, 162318 & 162319), total area of 21,533 m² w/ 3-breeder houses)	P12,170,800.00
AM-CP-247	Bgy. Lambakin, San Miguel	40,000 m² agricultural lot (TCT No. T-138507) w/ 10-poultry/ warehouse/office bldgs.	P 6,268,160.00
AM-CP-248	No. 78 Dr. Teofilo Santiago St., Poblacion, Sta. Maria	250 m² residential/semi-commercial lot (TCT No. T-18584 M) w/ 3-storey bldg.	P 2,459,590.00
AM-CP-249	No. 287 Kaybitin Extension Road, Bgy. San Gabriel, Sta. Maria	373 m² residential lot (TCT No. T-385268) w/ bldg.	P 415,400.00
LAGUNA			
AM-CP-250	L-20 B-5 Villa Consolacion (Conpil Village IV), Bgy. San Vicente, San Pedro	79 m² residential lot (TCT No. 536560) w/ bldg.	P 407,400.00
AM-PY-251	L-11 B-1, St. Joseph Village 5, Bgy. Butong, Cabuyao	52 m² residential lot (TCT No. T-545608) w/ bldg.	P 226,400.00
AM-MC-252	L-30 B-6, St. Ruiz Street, St. Joseph Village 6, Phase I, Butong, Cabuyao	40 m² residential lot (TCT No. T-562050) w/ bldg.	P 203,500.00
NUEVA ECIJA			
AM-PY-253	Vista Amor Subd., Bgy. Bangad, Cabanatuan City	100 m² residential lot (TCT No. T-114462) w/ bldg.	P 379,900.00
QUEZON			
AM-CP-254	Cor. XIII de Agosto St. (Nadera) & Calle Perpetua, Bgy. Mationa, Tayabas	9 parcels of lots (TCT Nos. T-416789 to T-416797) total area of 2,257 m²	P 5,421,600.00
RIZAL			
SUR-01	605 6th St., San Martin Subd., Bo. Muzon, Angono	240 m² residential lot (TCT No. T-5187151) w/ bldg.	P 872,600.00
CHATTELS (sale on "as-is, where-is" basis)			
AM-ED-255	Kabilang Gulod, Puerto Galera, Oriental Mindoro	M/V "Super 85", 85-footer motorized passenger ferry vessel, 185-persons cap.	P12,750,000.00
AM-JA-256	Bgy. Natividad, Pangil, Laguna	1-lot bottled water equipment (alkali-ion/electrolytic water)	P11,340,800.00
AM-JA-257	Bgy. Banao, Guinobatan, Albay	1-lot coconut oil processing equipment	P10,854,000.00
AM-MC-258	National Highway, Matingain II, Lemery, Batangas	1-set ice plant machinery & eqpt., 33-35 tons block ice cap	P 3,149,700.00
CWB-7a-f	No. 19 Road 7, Pagasa, Quezon City	1-lot consisting of pneumatic high speed overarm router/radial arm saw/air compressor/hand jointer planer/pneumatic nailer/pneumatic stapler	P 245,500.00
AMC-CP-259	Sariaya Imex Comp., Bgy. Pili Sariaya, Quezon	1-lot consisting of 7,000 liter cap. fuel steel tank/digital weighing scale/rotary mixer/assorted tools & scrap materials	P 37,500.00

BIDDERS ARE REMINDED:

1. To inspect the properties to determine their actual condition before the bidding;
2. To submit in DBP's official bid form available at the AMD-Acquired Assets, 2nd Floor, DBP Head Office during office hours; and
3. To be on time. No bids will be accepted once unsealing of the bids commences. The sale shall be subject to other terms and conditions which may be imposed by the Bank.

DBP RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, TO WAIVE ANY FORMALITY THEREIN, OR TO ACCEPT SUCH BIDS AS MAY BE CONSIDERED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE BANK. THE DECISION OF THE BANK IS FINAL AND BINDING.

For Inquiries, please call telephone numbers:
892-1566/893-7172 or 818-9511 local 2218/2252 for Code starting with AM;
926-1686 for CWB; 818-9511 local 1457 for BAC and 1486 for SUR.

ASSET MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

(PDI - Sept 19 & 20 2004)

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Trunk Line: (632) 845-2334 to 38

"I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

John 14:6

MILAGROS ROQUE LIWANAG

of Dinalupihan, Bataan and Manila

*Peacefully joined her Creator and her husband **Felipe, Sr.** on September 18, 2004 at the age of 76.*

Her children **Eduardo** and **Dolores**, **Emma**, **Cristina** and **Lery**, **Isabel** and **George**, **J.B.**; her stepchildren **Elsa**, **Firmo** and **Felipe, Jr.**; grandchildren **Bea**, **Annamarie**, **Gabriel** & **Maia**; **Niño** & **Vince**; **Carla** & **Louie**; sisters **Adelaida** (†), **Estelita** and **Fidela** and relatives request the pious readers to pray for her eternal rest and everlasting happiness.

Her cremated remains lie in state at the Baltazar Chapel, La Funeraria Paz-Sucat (inside Manila Memorial Park) Parañaque City.

Interment will follow after the 9:00 A.M. Mass at Manila Memorial Park, Sucat on Wednesday, September 22, 2004.

*In lieu of flowers donation to the **Foundation for Values Training, Inc.** in her name will be greatly appreciated.*

"I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me, will live even when he dies." – ***John 11:25***

DRA. CRISTETA PRINCIPE RAMOS-TABAMO

(October 27, 1911 – September 18, 2004)

- UST College of Medicine Class of 1938
- Founder of the Ramos General Hospital, Tarlac City

Peacefully passed on to eternal life to join her Creator
*as well as her husband **Pepe** (†)*
on September 18, 2004 at the age of 92.

Her bereaved children: **Zony & Romy Belmonte, Pempe (†) & Mina, Otto & Tess and Dida Amoren**

Grandchidren: **Tani & Chat, Rowena, Nona, Roy & Anne, Aimee & Robert Carreon, Christie & J.R. Gonzales, Chris, Venice, Kris, A.R., Ella & Mikki Atienza, Jat, Lee, Austine and Yogi**

Great grandchildren: **Teejay, Justine, Weena, Ryanne, Olie, Iggy, Erin, ChinChin, Maxine, Robie, Ciabelli, Rianna and Cameron.**

In-laws, nephews, nieces, other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Enriquez Funeral Parlor, F. Tañedo St., Tarlac City.

Interment will be at the Tarlac Catholic Cemetery, San Vicente, Tarlac City following the necrological service on Wednesday, September 22, 2004, 8:00 a.m. at the Tarlac Cathedral.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

Always caring... **INQUIRER OBITUARIES**

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT
MESSAGE OF THANKS
DEATH ANNIVERSARY
REQUIEMS

Angeles S. Roco

Fallecio en la gracia de Dios
17 Septiembre 2004
ala edad 97

Sus desconsolados: hermana: Carmen, Sobrina: Chiqui, Nietos: Rica, Chas, JR y Charo, Bisnietos: Ronnie y Adon, sobrinos y demas familia ruegan una oracion por el eterno descanso de su alma.

Esta de cuerpo presente en la Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

El entierro sera el Jueves, 23 Septiembre, ala 1:00 de la tarde en North Cemetery.

"...absent from the body to be present with the Lord"

2 Corinthians 5:8

I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me will live, eventhough he dies, and whoever believes in Me will never die.
John 11:25-26

Our Dearly Beloved Papa

Col. Federico L. Salcedo (Ret.)

Peacefully joined our Lord
on September 16, 2004 at the age of 85.

His wife **Josie**; his children **Joffre**, **Ricky** (†), **Alex** and **Marisol**, his grandchildren, great grandchildren, brother and sister as well as other relatives & friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

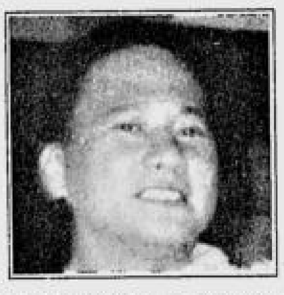
His remains lie in state at Chapel G, Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe, Makati City.

Interment will be on Thursday, September 23, 2004
at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City
after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

CLASSIFIEDS

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

A **WARRANT OF ARREST**, has been issued by THE COURT, RTC Branch 145, City of Makati, Criminal Case No. 03-4923 against: **NELSON T. LUKBAN**, CONTRACTOR & SOLE PROPRIETOR OF PLASTERBOARD BUILDERS, whose picture appears herein with last known address at 211-B Leonardo St., Karuhatan, Valenzuela City. Any information about him may be reported to Atty. Bernardo Atienza at Tel. No. 241-6446 from 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday to Friday. Reward awaits information giver leading to his arrest.



NELSON T. LUKBAN

(PDI – Sept. 20, 2004)

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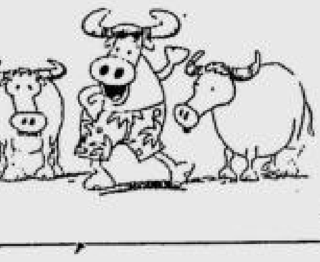

JOB Market

Read it every Sunday with the Philippine Daily Inquirer

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Agrarian Reform
AGRARIAN REFORM COMMUNITIES PROJECT
OFFICE OF THE BAC CHAIRMAN
Sinlaca ARC, Municipality of San Juan, La Union
Tel No 072-242-56-50
Contact Person: **Novie Vergara**

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

1. The Government of the Philippines through the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) has received a loan from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) toward the cost of Agrarian Reform Communities Project (ARCP). It is intended that part of the proceeds of this loan will be applied to eligible payments under the contracts for Rural Infrastructure Component for which this Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid is issued.
2. The Municipality of San Juan, La Union as implementing partner of the DAR for ARCP, invites contractors classified and registered with the Philippine Contractor's Accreditation Board (PCAB) for similar contracts as **Medium A** or higher to apply for eligibility and to bid for:

Name of Project	**CONCRETING/ROAD OPENING & INPUT OF TALOGTOG FARM TO MARKET ROAD**
Approved Budget for Contract	**Php6,454,614.44 (DC+CP+tax)**
Estimated Duration	**120 calendar days**
Scope of Work	**Concreting/Road Opening/Gravelling/Line Canal Rip-rapping/ 1 unit 2-barrel Box Culvert**

Minimum Required Equipment:

No. of Units	Description	Capacity
2	Road Grader	125-150 Hp
2	Vibratory Road Roller	10 tons at least
1	D4 Bulldozer	
1	Payloader	
8	Dump Truck	8 cu m.
2	Water Truck	800-1000 gal capacity
1	Backhoe	1 cu m.
2	1-Bagger Concrete Mixer	100 bags/day
1	Bar Cutter	
2	Concrete Vibrator (rod)	
1	Bar Bender	
1	Chain Block	10 tons
1	Service Vehicle	

	Date
Deadline for the submission of Letter of Intent and Eligibility Requirements	September 24, 2004
Issuance of Bidding Documents	September 13 to October 1, 2004
Pre-Bid Conference	October 8, 2004 at 10:00 AM
Submission & Opening of Bids	October 21, 2004 at 10:00 AM

3. Prospective bidders should secure and fill up the Information Sheets from the BAC Secretariat. Eligibility requirements, in sealed envelopes, properly bound, with all contents numbered consecutively and signed by the prospective bidder or his duly authorized representative must be submitted to; The BAC Chairman, Municipal Town Hall, San Juan, La Union
4. Unless otherwise indicated in the instruction to bidders or other bidding and contract documents, all particulars relative to the procurement and contract implementation shall be governed by RA 9184 and its IRR-A.
5. Bid documents will be issued to eligible bidders at Office of the Bids and Awards Committee, Municipal Town Hall, San Juan, La Union upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Php5,000.00.
6. The implementing agency reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any minor defect therein and accept the other most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) BAC Chairman

(PDI–Sept. 13 & 20, 2004)

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Jaro, Iloilo City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The **National Food Authority (NFA)**, Region 6 invites all sack manufacturers to participate in the bidding for the supply of 300,000 pieces more or less Palay Empty Sacks in accordance with NFA specifications and design with approved ABC of P2,637,000.00.

The schedule of bidding activities are as follows:

Activity	Date	Time
1. Issuance of Eligibility Requirements and Bid Forms	Sept. 23-30, 2004	8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
2. Pre-bidding Conference	October 5, 2004	1:30 PM
3. Submission and Opening of Eligibility and Bid Documents 2004	October 5, 2004	3:00 PM

Interested parties may secure the eligibility requirements and bid forms from the Secretariat c/o Ms. Marilou M. Paguntalan of NFA Iloilo Regional Office, 2nd Floor from September 23-30, 2004 after payment of a non-refundable/non-transferable fee of Five Hundred Pesos (P500.00).

For any inquiry, please contact RBAC Chairperson or Ms. Marilou M. Paguntalan at telephone numbers (033) 329-2165 and 320-6246.

The NFA reserves the right to reject any or all bid proposals, to waive any required formality, technicality or defect therein and may accept the bid which is deemed most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) VILMA H. ZARRAGA, MNSA
ARD/RBAC Chairperson

(PDI - Sept. 20, 21 & 22, 2004)

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CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
Constitution Hills, Diliman, Quezon City

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

for The Civil Service Commission
Personnel Information Database System

1. The Civil Service Commission has received funds from the E-Government Fund and invites Eligible Bidders for the **development, installation and maintenance of the *Civil Service Personnel Information Database System* and provision for the technical training support** with an approved budget for the contract of approximately PHP70M, inclusive of VAT, and all applicable taxes and duties.
2. The project, estimated to be completed over a period of 12 months, will include the i) Development and installation of the Civil Service Commission Personnel Information Database System (PIDS), including the delivery and installation of the necessary computer software, hardware and accessories, wide area and local area network facilities, and provision for warranty, maintenance services and support for three (3) years, ii) Capture of personnel data of an estimated 1.5 million government civil servants, iii) Provision for Systems Administration and User Training and various technical training on topics ranging from IT project management, database administration, systems analysis and design, application development tool and related topics.
3. Procurement and selection of Consultants shall be conducted using the ***IMPLEMENTING RULES AND REGULATIONS OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9184, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT REFORM ACT*** and is open to all eligible bidders as defined in the Act.
4. If you are interested in being considered as eligible bidder, you should submit to us your Letter of Intent (LOI) together with your application for eligibility at the address indicated below no later than October 4, 2004, 10:00 AM. A guide to the preparation of documents for eligibility is available upon request at the e-mail address also indicated below.
5. Bidders who pass the eligibility requirements shall be subject to short listing and **only those short listed may participate in the actual bidding**. They shall be notified accordingly.
6. The short listed bidders may then secure the Bidding Documents at the address below starting **October 9, 2004 to October 16, 2004** from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM upon submission of a written application and payment of a non-refundable fee of PHP 20,000.00.
7. The short listed bidders shall be invited to attend the Pre-Bid Conference on **October 18, 2004** at 10:00 AM at the Function Room A, 2nd Floor of the Civil Service Commission Office, Constitution Hills, Diliman, Quezon City.
8. All queries on the bidding documents shall be made in writing and sent to the address below no later than **October 27, 2004**.
9. All bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security payable to the Civil Service Commission subject to Sections 27 and 28 of the IRR of RA 9184.
10. Deadline for the submission of bids is on November 8, 2004 at 12:00 noon at the address below. Bids received after the scheduled time will not be accepted/entertained and will be returned unopened.
11. Opening of technical proposals is on **November 8, 2004** at 2:00 PM at the Function Room A, 2nd Floor of the Civil Service Commission Office, Constitution Hills, Diliman, Quezon City, while opening of financial proposals is on **November 26, 2004** at 10:00 AM in the same address. Technical proposals shall be evaluated using the Quality Cost Based System.
12. The address for submissions of LOI and Application for Eligibility, Bids (Technical and Financial Proposals) and queries on the bidding documents is:

    Assistant Commissioner Elmer R. Bartolata
    Project Manager
    Office for Planning and Administration
    Civil Service Commission
    Constitution Hills, Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines
    Telephone : (063) 9317931
    Fax : (063) 9317931
    E-mail : erbartolata@csc.gov.ph
    Copy to : shallaine@csc.gov.ph, cbalboa@csc.gov.ph
    Subject : CSC-PIDS

13. The Civil Service Commission reserves the right to waive any formality in the responses to the eligibility requirements and to this invitation. The Civil Service Commission further reserves the right to reject any or all bids, or declare a failure of bidding, and to award the contract to the bidder whose bid is most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd) **Assistant Commissioner ELMER R. BARTOLATA**
Chairman, Special Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI Sept. 20, 2004)

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Surviving the Zeroes

By Joey G. Alarilla
Contributor

Editor's Note: The author won third prize for Essay (English Division) in the 2004 Don Carlos Palanca Memorial Awards for Literature. "Surviving the Zeroes" is dedicated to the author's wife Ellen and daughter Sam, without whom this essay, he says, his first Palanca award and daily existence itself would not be possible.

OUR daughter Sam, who is two years and four months old, walks over to the DVD player and casually presses the eject button. She removes the disc, replaces it with a new one—most likely "Toy Story," which lately she has been watching about a google times a day—and then pushes the button again to close the DVD tray.

This is something that she has been doing even before she turned a year old, though of course not with such finesse at the start. She also tinkers with the other gadgets and appliances around the house, such as our desktop PC, cell phones, Xbox console, Game Boy Advance and digital video camera. Sam takes technology for granted not only because she possesses the supreme self-confidence of a young child and we encourage her to explore, but also since we have been blessed to live in an age where such digital tools and toys have become accessible to many people.

The Zeroes

Welcome to the Zeroes and the future that our children are building today. More than any other generation that came before it, the children born during the Zeroes (also known as the 00s, Zero Years or, my personal favorite, the Oh-Ohs) will be called upon to build a new world and create the rules for surviving in it. They are the first generation whose formative years will be shaped by pervasive technology, whether in our homes or in our offices (which, in my case, are one and the same). They are the true children of the digital age—not we who may have embraced the information technology revolution but whose roots are firmly embedded in the analog world.

For Sam, writing e-mail will be as natural as using pen and paper to produce a letter. I'm not even sure if these children of the Zeroes will find time for snail mail, though my wife Ellen and I will certainly do our best to introduce her to letter writing. The PC will be a familiar friend to my daughter, instead of being the alien creature I first encountered in high school way back in the '80s, whose specs are so unimaginably obsolete today that it might be hard to convince these children that those dark ages actually existed. They might regard as fairy tales the days when cellular phones could double as dumbbells, music came in vinyl records and cassette tapes, and you truly had to dial the numbers on a telephone.

New generation

Think about how far we've come in terms of technology in the last decade or two. I'm talking as a martial law baby, whose teen years were spent listening to New Wave, wearing penny loafers or topsiders, and sporting big hair tamed with mousse or gel. Listening to music meant buying cassette tapes and popping one inside a Walkman. I spent countless hours waiting for favorite songs to be played on the radio, so I could record and compile them on a cassette tape. The compact disc back then was unimaginably expensive, the players even more so—something that may be hard to understand in an age where CDs, CD-ROMs, VCDs and DVDs have been pirated and all sorts of hardware cloned and modified.

Back then, few people had even seen a personal computer, and you could count on your fingers those you knew who had one in their homes. I was never really a techie, but I had friends who were and I learned BASIC and some assembly language from them and our high school computer classes. No matter how fascinating it was, however, I never thought then that the PC would become an important part of my daily life, that it would cease being the hobby of nerds and become a tool that people from all walks of life would be able to use.

As more people have adopted technology, however, the prices of PCs and other devices have dropped, enabling even more people to buy these tools. I'm not saying that computers have already become affordable to everyone, particularly since we live in the Philippines and many of our countrymen can't even eat three square meals a day. Still, compared to the past few years, more of us have access to cheaper and better technology.

Twenty years later, I live each day fully embracing technology and using it to try to make life better for my family and me. It's been almost a year since I decided to work completely from home. Partly it's due to selfish reasons—because of the hellish traffic conditions in this country, you might actually be spending more time going to and from your office than you do on your actual job. Mostly, however, it's because I made the decision to play an important role in my daughter's life.

When Sam was born on December 27, 2001 and I took my paternity leave, I realized just how much I wanted to spend each day with her and watch her as she grew up. Even before Sam was born, I vowed to myself that I would be a hands-on dad, that I would be a full partner to my wife in taking care of our child. But no matter how much you might plan for it, nothing really prepares you for that moment when you see your baby for the first time, and you're overwhelmed by just how much you love your child. I know, it sounds sentimental, and I've never really seen myself as an expressive person or a nurturer. Somehow, being a father changed that. I didn't want to miss out on those early years. I didn't want to be a stranger to Sam.

Telecommuting

I'm lucky that I live in an age where it's possible to even consider telecommuting, and I've been fortunate to land in a field where it can be a practical alternative. Of course, it helps that I work for a forward-looking online news company, though even then it wasn't easy to convince them to agree to the arrangement. After all, it's still hard to find companies, particularly in the Philippines, who are comfortable with the idea of employees working from home. Some still want to be reassured by your physical presence, so that they can actually see you working.

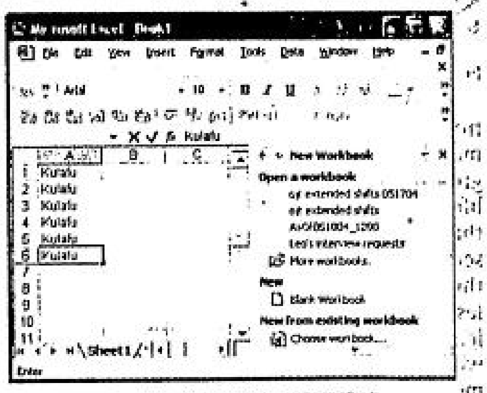
In fact, to push through with my plans, I had to make a sacrifice. I would give up my benefits as a regular employee and gamble that they would still retain me as a consultant, churning out the same kind of work without having to be physically present at the office. It meant giving up job security and employee benefits. Becoming a consultant meant I could take on other projects outside the company, but it also entailed a lot of risks, since when I made the decision to leave, they never promised that they would still tap my services. I'm fortunate that I have a wife who understood and supported my decision, and that in the end everything worked out as planned.

Terrible Twos

Every day is an adventure with Sam. I'm not pretending that it's easy. The lines between your work and personal life get blurred when your office is also your home. A toddler suffering from the Terrible Twos (or, more accurately, inflicting suffering) doesn't cease to throw tantrums just because you're working. For the past year, I've had to balance work with the time I spend bathing Sam, feeding her, changing her diapers, playing with her, reading stories out loud, sterilizing her bottles, taking her out for a stroll—you get the idea. We browse the Sesame Street website together, play a Blue's Clues CD-ROM game on the PC, and watch home movies of her that I take with our digital videocam. I wouldn't exchange this set-up for anything, but it's an arrangement that I have to work hard for, and I admit that on particularly trying days I wonder if I've bitten off more than I could chew.

I can almost hear mothers out there saying, "Why do men have to make it sound so hard?" But it is hard, and I have to say that I'm in awe of mothers who have been doing this kind of gig

SURVIVING/B15



POWERTIPS

Copying cell content in MS Excel spredsheet

By Jerry Liao

YOU can copy the content and formula of cells unto the current cell you're working in using Microsoft Excel. Here's how:

1) To copy the formula from the cell above the one you're working on, press [CTRL] then the apostrophe key (hold down the CTRL key and press the apostrophe key).

2) To copy the value from the cell above, press [CTRL] then the quotation mark key (hold down the CTRL key and press the quotation mark key).

For more tips, visit www.brainshare.com.ph. We would like to invite everyone to attend the Powertips seminar on Oct. 25, 2004 at the Edsa Shangrila Hotel. Tickets are available at all SM TicketNet outlets. See you there. For more information, visit http://www.brainshare.com.ph/powertips.

Mindanao . . .

From page B16

aged local businesses to think more globally if they want to compete in the region.

"Mindanao businesses still operate on a regional scale," the former trade secretary said.

Turning Mindanao into an e-services hub is one of the measures being pushed by Roxas in support of the 10-point agenda of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

Local business and ICT groups presented the proposed action agenda to President Arroyo at the Mindanao Business Conference.

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COMPUTERWORLD

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Sun™ Tech Days delivers a variety of content, including technical sessions, in-depth sessions, code camps and Hands on Labs, all of which aid developers through the software lifecycle, from architecture to testing and deployment.

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Regular Price	P 2,000 per delegate
Government Price	P 1,500 per delegate
Academe Price	P 1,000 per delegate
Hands-On Lab	Additional P 500 per session per delegate

Every group of 10 registered participants is entitled to get an 11th seat free.

* Conference fee is inclusive of delegates kit, meals and snacks.

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Nov. 3, 2004 - discounts on certification vouchers and raffle stub.

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The organizers reserve the right to amend the program without prior notice.

AGENDA - DAY 1 - Nov. 4, 2004

	Track 1	Track 2	Track 3
AM 7:30 - 9:00	Registration and Breakfast		
AM 9:00	Sun™ Tech Days Welcome		
9:10	Country Manager Introduction		
9:30	Sun™ Keynote		
10:20	Sun™ Technical Demo		
11:00	LUNCH — Meet the Experts: J2ME, J2SE, J2EE		
PM 12:00	To Be Advised	To Be Advised	Sun™ Hands-On Lab* J2SE 5.0 Instructor Led Lab, BYOL**
1:00	J2EE Persistence: Explore your persistence options	Advanced Wireless Application Dev't	
2:00	AFTERNOON BREAK		
2:15	To Be Advised	Solaris 10: Leapfrog the rest w/ Dtrace, Zones and many new features	Sun™ Hands-On Lab* J2SE 5.0 & Mobility, BYOL**
2:30			
3:15	Java Server Faces and Sun™ Java Studio Creator: Experience the Next Generation Web Application Framework	NetBeans 4.0 and Sun™ Java Studio 7 Enterprise Edition: Maximize Developer Productivity	
4:15			
5:15	COCKTAIL RECEPTION		
6:30			

8:30 am 6:30 pm Sponsor Pavilion Open *requires separate registration seats are limited **bring your own laptop

AGENDA - DAY 2 - Nov. 5, 2004

	Track 1	Track 2	Track 3
AM 7:30 - 9:00	Registration and Breakfast		
AM 9:00	Welcome		
9:05	Platinum Keynote		
10:05	Java Jacket Give Away & Refer A Friend Raffle		
10:20	Platinum Keynote		
11:20	LUNCH		
PM 12:20	Java Web Services: Learn how you can build Service Oriented Architecture	Java Game Development: See it, hear it and feel it	Sun™ Hands-On Lab* & Web Services Creator, JSF, Struts & Web Services, BYOL**
1:30			
2:05	To Be Advised		
2:15	AFTERNOON BREAK		
2:30	Sun™ and Auto ID: Build Auto ID solutions today using Sun™ Java System RFID Software	Sun™ Java Enterprise System: Experience the industry's first integrated enterprise system	Sun™ Hands On* Lab To Be Advised BYOL**
3:15			
4:15	J2SE & J2EE Performance: Learn how to write robust Java applications	End to End Security: Secure your enterprise application top to bottom	
5:15			
4:30			

8:30 am 6:30 pm Sponsor Pavilion Open *requires separate registration seats are limited **bring your own laptop

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Surviving the Zeroes

From page B14

from time immemorial. I think I've learned more lessons in the past year that I've spent growing up with Sam than at any time in my life. I've learned to laugh more and see through her eyes and those of my wife, who sees all the beauty in life, even in the smallest things. I've learned to be more patient and be less of a control freak. Anyone who believes it's easy to mold a child has never had to deal with a two-year-old in full toddler defiance mode. I've learned to live, accept and let go.

Without technology, it would have been difficult, if not impossible, to pull off this kind of arrangement. Technology enables me to download articles—some from the Cebu office—via file transfer protocol (FTP), edit them using Microsoft Word, and send them to my editorial assistant via FTP or e-mail. I keep in touch with my assistant and relay instructions through e-mail, Yahoo! Messenger and text messaging. I have a correspondent in New York and contributors from different parts of the world. This virtual network has worked for me for the past year, and these are the same digital tools that allow multinationals to outsource their business processes to the Philippines, or freelance journalists to write for different publications around the world. As that old New Economy saying goes: "It's not where you are, it's what you know."

Some people have expressed the fear that technology will dehumanize us. What they might not realize is that more than just being a network of computers (or, more accurately, a network of networks), the Internet is primarily a network of people. It allows us to connect and communicate in ways that once might have been too difficult or downright impossible. My wife and I constantly send each other e-mail, and keep in touch with our friends across the country and around the world. For instance, she regularly exchanges e-mail with her cousin in Australia and her former boss and good friend in Amsterdam. Using Yahoo! Messenger, I exchange instant messages with a college buddy who's now based in Virginia and another friend who moved to France.

Enter Friendster

One of the most popular Internet applications nowadays, especially among teens in the Philippines, is Friendster, which works on the principle of six degrees of separation. It connects you to a network of people—not only to your friends but also to the friends of the friends of your friends. And since we live in the Philippines, obviously text messaging is a way of life. These are just some of the ways that technology allows us to reach out to old friends and build new relationships. In fact, we have fewer excuses not to keep in touch.

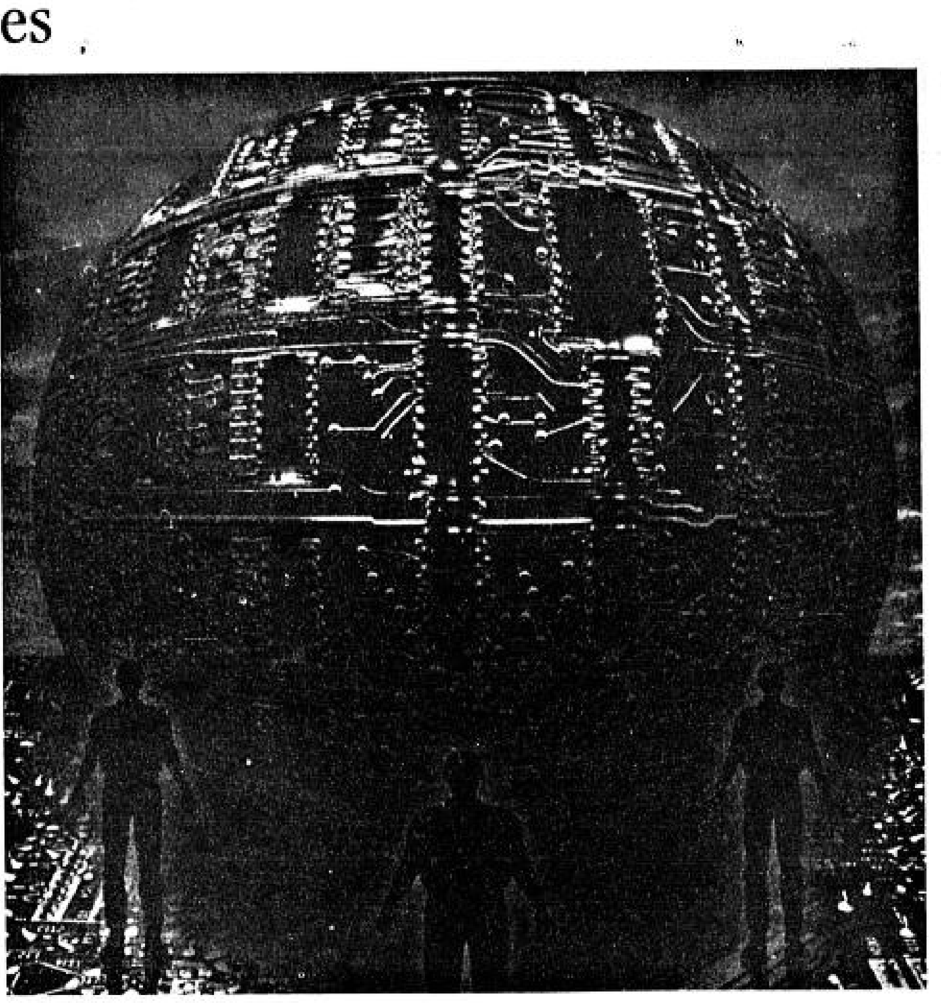
Technology is neither good nor evil. To hear media, politicians and religious groups talk, you would think that the Internet is nothing more than a haven for pornography, drugs, pedophiles and other evils. Never mind that all these imperfections existed in society long before the Internet was born. Never mind that no one is pointing a gun at you and forcing you to surf for porn. True, the Internet has its dark side, with websites for and by racists, terrorists, perverts and other unsavory characters. That's because the Web mirrors the real world, and different people decide to use it for different purposes. We are the ones who should take responsibility for our actions, and at the risk of sounding like a stereotypical parent, we should be aware of what our children are doing and what kind of content they are being exposed to—whether it's on the Internet, on TV or in the papers.

I think this love-hate relationship with technology springs from the tug-of-war between our fear of the unknown and the expectations that technology has created. It's only fitting that the Zero Years were ushered in by a problem with zeroes, namely the Millennium Bug, Year 2000 problem or Y2K. The hysteria that accompanied Y2K exposed just how deep-seated our fear of technology is, that maybe like Mary Shelley's Frankenstein we are not in control of our creations.

Promises, promises

Ironically, the Zeroes, which you might have expected before to be an age of unwavering faith in digital tools and continuing tech-driven prosperity, has not been kind to the virtual world. From Y2K to the dotcom crash to the Love Bug or ILOVEYOU virus to the current tech and telco slump, the Zeroes have made it unfashionable to be a tech evangelist. In a way, this is a backlash against all the hype of the dotcom years, and continuing resentment over the expectations that were created and yet remain unmet. A paperless office? People have been talking about that for over 30 years. Convergence? It still takes days or weeks just to get a stupid landline in the first place. Broadband? It's cheaper now, sure, but sometimes you're paying a premium but end up getting dial-up access speeds.

In spite of these broken promises, however, it's still true that more people are now enjoying the fruits of technological innovation, from the latest GPRS (general packet radio service) mobile phones to unbelievably fast desktop and mobile computers that also double as home entertainment systems. But even as we worship the material trappings, we have lost our faith in the underlying religion of technology. We use the gadgets, we lust after the gizmos, but you will not usually hear the media spout New Economy rhetoric and gush over the life-changing impact of the Internet. That would be so, well, '90s. Over four years into the Zeroes, we seem to be simply drifting, waiting for something to jump-start the economy, hoping that the next big thing would somehow bring about a new New Economy.



Maybe the problem was that those of us who chose to embrace technology early on unrealistically expected the world to change overnight. We believed that technology would level the playing field and that the New Economy would be a meritocracy, underestimating how entrenched old habits and hierarchies are. Business is supposed to move at the speed of thought, but the reality is that people and organizations do not. You can talk about the transforming powers of the Internet, celebrate freedom of expression and the absence of old rules, but you won't convince society to change in an instant. The dotcoms believed they were exempt from business rules and cycles. We know what happened to them.

In these more sober times, we've also come to realize that maybe we have been changing things for change's sake. We wanted so much to be digital that we took for granted that it would always be good for us. Look at the example of e-books, all the hype over print-on-demand, and, once again, the paperless office. While storing information in digital form has its advantages, some of us mistakenly took this to mean that paper was a thing of past—or at least it ought to be. Some brash new media organizations loudly proclaimed the death of print and other traditional media. Some predicted the death of the middleman. In this sense, they wanted the real world reshaped in the image of the virtual one.

Fear and hype

I think that in falling flat on our faces in our mistaken assumption of the pace of change, we have embraced the opposite extreme. We now no longer dare to dream big or to fly as high as in those early years of the Internet revolution. Reality, however, is somewhere between fear and hype. It's time for us to renew our faith in the digital tools that we have inherited, while accepting that just because something is old-fashioned does not mean it's obsolete. For instance, I would never give up my precious but oh-so-analog books, but that does not mean I'm not grateful that I don't have to spend a lot of money on a bulky encyclopedia set when I can use Encarta or browse the Web. I know some writers who still prefer to crank out their articles on a manual typewriter. That is their choice, and I respect that. Some music lovers prefer the imperfections of vinyl records to the sterile sound of a CD. Again, different strokes for different folks.

The key here is to remember that we have more choices now. We can each adopt technology at our own pace, for our own needs. Maybe it has something to do with being a father, but I've learned that change is something that happens one day at a time. I've also learned that your child is his or her own person, that you cannot force her to follow the image you have created in your own mind and must instead give her the freedom to become who she is.

Surviving the Zeroes means realizing that we are more than this digital stream of 1s and 0s, yet that these tools are here to liberate us if we let them. Look at all the changes that have happened in human society. Maybe they haven't been as dramatic as the tech-driven utopia we once imagined, but who would have thought only a few years ago that more fathers would want to be the ones to stay home and take care of their children? I'm not saying this to disrespect our own fathers, who made the best of what society was offering them at the time. I am not saying that the choice I made is right for everyone. I'm just saying that we should recognize that we do have a choice, that we can all take a leap of faith and strive for a better balance between our work and our life.

I don't know what the future holds for my daughter, anymore than I could have foreseen back in high school that I would one day be working from home. But one thing's for sure: I'll be with her every step of the way. At the risk of sounding like a stereotypical parent, I think we have a responsibility to give our kids better options than we ourselves enjoyed. The advantage of our children is that they don't carry around our baggage of fear and frustration. I envy them because they will literally see the virtual world with the eyes of a child. What many of us have lost is the sense of wonder we felt during those heady days when most people either had not heard of the Internet or were too intimidated by it. Remember the first time you saw those dinosaurs on the big screen in "Jurassic Park"? Or how about the first time you saw "Toy Story," the world's first fully computer-generated movie (which, as I mentioned at the start, is Sam's current favorite. Yes, I'm starting the brainwashing early, so sue me.) That's the kind of feeling we should rekindle, the sense that technology can offer endless possibilities. That's what we can learn from our children.

After Y2K, after the dotcom crash, after 9-11, we no longer think in terms of changing the world or formulating a philosophy for living with technology. Instead, we have surrendered to the gods of small things: What can I do to block spam? How do I remove this virus? What ring tone should I download? Could you pass some of your SMS load to me? Practical questions, maybe, but ones that only deal with the process and not the purpose of technology in our lives.

On the one hand, this is where our children will surpass us, because they have not yet been disillusioned by technology and have the arrogance of youth that we ourselves once possessed. On the other hand, we must also teach them not to take technology too much for granted. The danger is that they might not appreciate the hard work that went into building this digital world. How would they be able to appreciate how much easier life is nowadays, if they have been weaned on broadband and never experienced the frustration of surfing the Net using a 14.4K modem? Will they feel entitled to the best technology without having to earn it? In a world of instant solutions, from instant messages to instant noodles, will they learn to attach much value to anything?

Surviving the Zeroes means realizing that we are more than this digital stream of 1s and 0s, yet that these tools are here to liberate us if we let them. Look at all the changes that have happened in human society. Maybe they haven't been as dramatic as the tech-driven utopia we once imagined, but who would have thought only a few years ago that more fathers would want to be the ones to stay home and take care of their children? I'm not saying this to disrespect our own fathers, who made the best of what society was offering them at the time. I'm not saying the choice I made is right for everyone. I'm just saying we should recognize that we do have a choice, that we can take a leap of faith and strive for a better balance between our work and our life.

New eyes

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In our quest to empower them with technology, we must be careful not to spoil them. We must be careful not to let them lose sight of the most important element of the virtual world, which is human creativity. Technology is a tool that gives shape to our thoughts, not a crutch for minds that have lost the power to imagine. Once again, I feel sheepish about sounding like our parents who began sentences with, "In our day..." But it is true that instead of playing games such as hide-and-seek and tag or creating their own makeshift toys, many kids today would rather just play a videogame or watch TV. This again is where we should come in, because it's our responsi-

SURVIVING/B16

New GSA chair has high hopes for RP 3G

By Alex Villafania
Contributor

THE NEW chair of the Global Mobile Suppliers Association (GSA) expects the Philippines to be a successful adapter of 3G mobile network technologies in Asia, based on the success of the country's telecommunications industry.

Alfred Ling, newly appointed chair of the alliance, forecast the growth of rich multimedia content such as entertainment, games and location-based services in the Philippines when local carriers start using 3G-based technologies. In addition, consumers will also demand services related to mobile payment and other e-commerce-related business applications when 3G starts rolling out.

"The Philippines is unique because of the success of the two major telecommunications firms in providing data services. This trend will continue though it will be closely followed by basic voice services," Ling said.

Ling cited a recent report by research firm EMCWorld Cellular Data Metrics which showed that Smart Communications and Globe Telecom were leading in the revenue category for mobile data.

He also noted that carriers can provide 3G services in select areas in the Philippines while still offering basic mobile telecommunications to rural areas.

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Editor Leo Magno

Gov't reorganization puts RP IT initiatives in backburner

By Alexander Villafania
Contributor

DESPITE best efforts by the IT industry to turn the country into an e-services hub, the Arroyo administration will not be prioritizing IT initiatives for a while.

Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr. admitted that many IT initiatives might be shelved to give way to government's austerity measures.

"President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has already stated that her administration has to focus on resolving the fiscal crisis, and IT is not a major priority for her yet," Magsaysay said.

However, he explained that the IT industry will eventually benefit from the government's austerity measures.

"These measures are designed for long-term success and all industries, including IT, will benefit from them," Magsaysay said.

Two weeks ago, Ms Arroyo called for austerity measures revolving around the Bayanihan Fund which is seen to address the burgeoning fiscal crisis.

Ms Arroyo has championed IT projects since 2001. She became co-chair of the Information Technology and E-Commerce Council and signed an order to turn it into the Commission on Information and Communications Technology, paving the way for the establishment of an IT department.

Blackberry 7230: E-mail in my pocket

By Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva
Contributor

***Editor's note:** This entire article was sent from the field by our reporter using a Blackberry.*

I AM sitting in front of my house watching my daughter Natasha learn to ride a bike, while I write this article. No, I'm not using a laptop as you might have suspected. I'm using a palm-sized (not to be confused with the Palm brand) device called a Blackberry.

The Blackberry was developed by Research in Motion (RIM) as a device for sending and receiving e-mail wirelessly. Newer models can also make phone calls, send text messages, and browse the Internet—all in a lightweight and slim design.

But any gadget is only as good as the software or applications that come with it. So I will take you through some of the major features of the Blackberry based on what I believe field telecommuters (such as journalists like myself) find useful.

First, let's focus on the e-mail features of the Blackberry (the 7230 model for this review). This is the key feature of the Blackberry and it does a good job of letting you send and receive e-mail while on the go.

But there are still some limitations. Office users who want access to their office e-mail directly need to be using either Microsoft Exchange or IBM Lotus Domino as an e-mail platform.

If your office doesn't use these e-mail systems, you can still send or receive e-mail but you'll have to create an e-mail account with your mobile network provider (Smart Communications in this case).

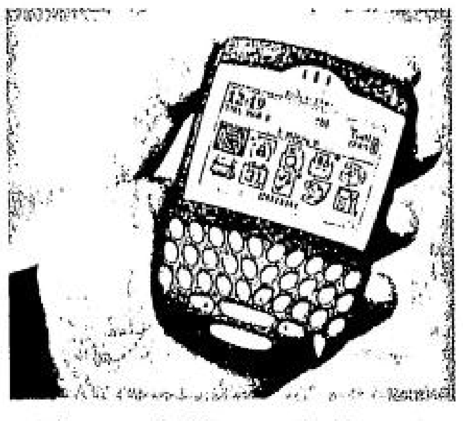
However, Smart lets you access up to 10 regular POP e-mail accounts on your Blackberry by specifying them when you sign up for your e-mail account.

For this review, I used Smart's e-mail system to test the e-mail feature.

To create an e-mail account, I visited Smart's Blackberry website to activate the e-mail service. It is fairly easy to set it up. Once you're on the website, you are asked to supply a PIN (personal identification number) and your unit's unique International Mobile Equipment Identifier (IMEI) code.

You can find the IMEI and a default PIN under the Options menu and under a sub-menu labeled Status.

It took me around five minutes to activate the e-mail account. After a few seconds, I received a welcome message from Smart saying that my e-mail account was ready for use.



I then started adding e-mail addresses into Blackberry's integrated phone and address book in order to start sending, err, spam to friends.

This part was a bit tedious since I had to familiarize myself with the built-in QWERTY keyboard. For quite some time, my right thumb had been doing the typing. Now I had to train my left thumb.

Once my contacts were in, I started sending test messages. In a few minutes, I got replies.

By the way, the Blackberry uses the General Packet Radio Service or GPRS network to send your e-mail—which means you might find it hard to send or receive e-mail in areas where Smart's GPRS signal is weak.

The Blackberry can also open e-mail attachments in Microsoft Word, Powerpoint, as well as other formats, but it lacks a memory card expansion slot so you could run out of space for a lot of attachments.

Aside from e-mail, the Blackberry has other features like a calendar and a WAP browser for accessing stripped-down versions of websites.

However, it lacks a stylus, something I've gotten used to having in handhelds. It has no Bluetooth support either.

The unit also needs an automatic backlighting system to make it easier to type in low-light conditions, though the flipside of that is that the unit has great battery life—I didn't need to charge the unit for almost a week (I also got a tip from Pearl Santos of Smart that if you always keep the Blackberry in its holster, the battery life becomes longer).

Overall, the Blackberry 7230 can replace your phone and PDA if e-mail is the key application for you. Corporate users who don't use Exchange and Domino may have to go through the additional hassle of adding yet another e-mail address to their calling cards, but for some that's a small price to pay for on-the-go e-mail access.

Mindanao eyed as e-services hub

By Erwin Oliva
Contributor

DAVAO CITY—Mindanao business and information communications technology groups are pushing to make this region one of the e-services hubs in the country.

According to an action agenda put together by these groups, Mindanao hopes to serve as an offshore outsourcing destination alternative to Cebu and Metro Manila.

This will contribute to government's efforts to decongest Metro Manila by bringing businesses and government agencies to key provinces.

The Mindanao ICT Task Force in particular is suggesting more aggressive marketing initiatives to attract outsourcing contracts, the action agenda indicated.

The marketing initiatives will be done in partnership with the Commission on Information and Communications Technology (CICT) and the Department of Trade and Industry, the action agenda noted.

The action agenda is also pushing for the creation of so-called e-community centers in select barangays in Mindanao.

An initiative of the CICT, the e-community centers will offer Internet access and public calling centers using voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP).

The action agenda puts particular emphasis on interconnecting Mindanao businesses with outsourcing jobs coming from Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia and Malaysia.

In a keynote speech at the Mindanao Business Conference, Sen. Manuel Roxas encour-

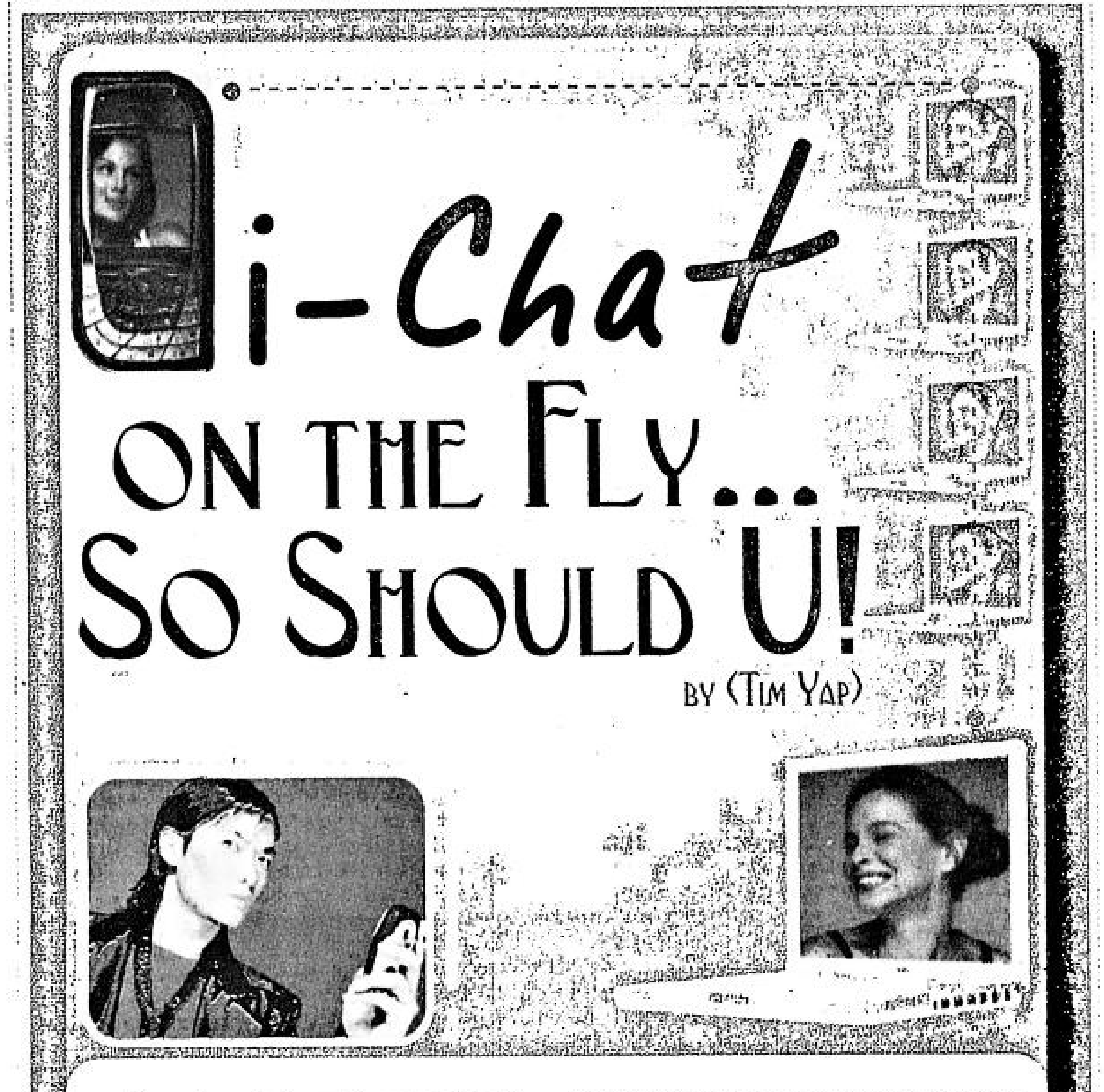
MINDANAO/ B14

Surviving the Zeroes

From page B15

bility to know what our children are doing. We can't shirk our duties by putting the blame on technology. It is up to us to remind them of the value of the real world—whether it is by taking walks in the park, giving them a pet or building a sand castle on the beach. In the process, we will also relearn the value of our own creativity, the human element that our digital tools are only supposed to enhance. After all, "Toy Story" was a great movie not only because it was a dazzling display of state-of-the-art computer animation, but, more important, because it told a great story and contained believable characters. Think about why "Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within" was a technical success yet was ignored by the public, and you will know what I mean.

The journey is only beginning. Together, we will discover more truths about the world that our children are creating. In the end, we might not be the ones to enter the Promised Land, but we can lead the way.


i-Chat
ON THE FLY...
So Should U!
BY (TIM YAP)

It's not easy being a fly guy or fly girl... Parties here, photo shoots there. Being on the go round-the-clock means you need to find ways to keep your life in order—be it with family, friends or business. That's why SMART has just added a new twist to its already popular i-CHAT service...

SMART i-CHAT is the hottest thing in town. It's the world's first mobile phone to PC instant messaging service. And now, through Addict Mobile, SMART has served up another winner by making photo messaging via MMS possible! What i-CHAT does is it takes the popular PC to PC instant messaging service a step further by allowing you to stay in touch with your on-line friends through your SMART celfone. This means that even while you're on move, you can still send and receive instant messages to your friends via their PC's Chikka instant messaging program—all for just P2.50 per SMS!

And that's not all. With the new MMS photo messaging service, you can even attach photos to your text exchange, giving it a 'feast your eyes on this' kind of twist! Like all SMART innovations, this one's so easy to use too. **To send an MMS from PC to phone, simply click on the 'SEND A PICTURE' button, select who you want to send it to, click on 'BROWSE' to select the image, then just enter a name for the image along with a message ("Boracay" – Wish you were here?!) and click 'SEND'—it's that simple! Sending an MMS from the phone is just as easy. Simply create an MMS and send to 277 followed by the recipient's Chikka ID, for just P5.00 per MMS! To find out more about this brilliant service, log on to** http://www.smart.com.ph/ichat **There, you will find simple instructions on how to register and download both the SMART i-CHAT MMS and i-CHAT classic programs, enabling you to start experiencing mobile phone to PC instant messaging!**

So next time you're partying out, away for a shoot, or just chillin' in the beach, always remember that keeping in touch with your buds is plain sailing with SMART i-CHAT. Seeing is believing, so don't just say it with words—say it with MMS photos too. Give SMART i-CHAT a go today... you gotta see it to believe it!

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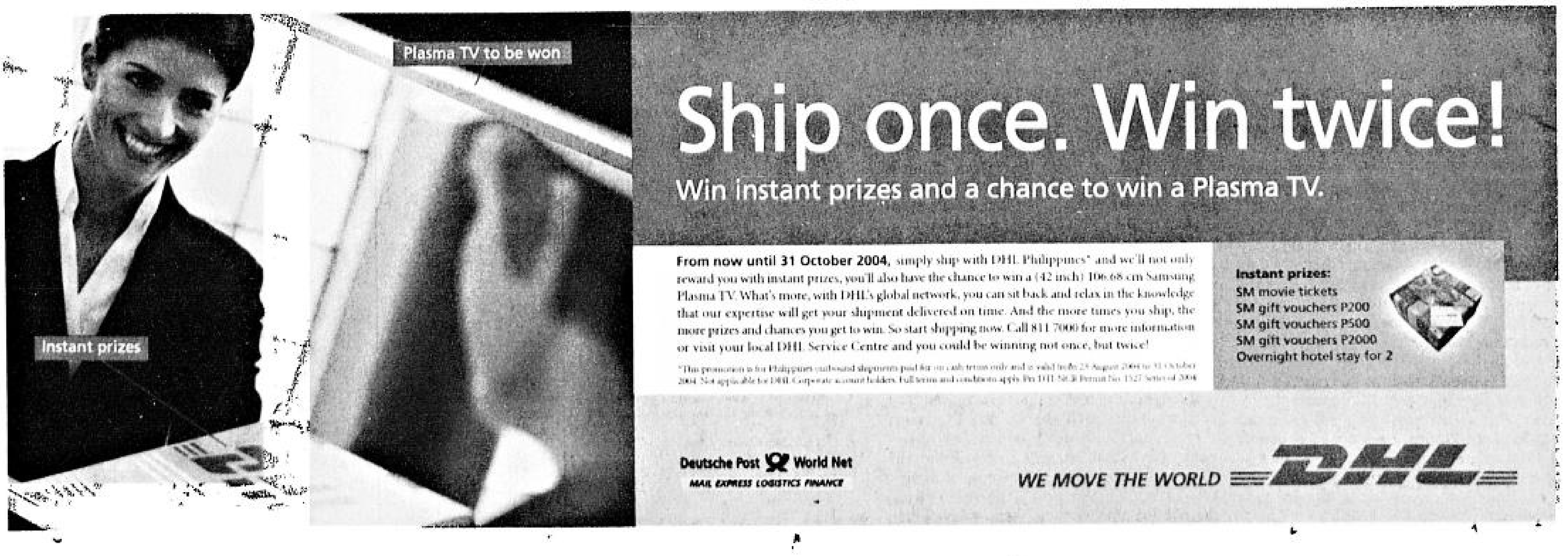
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Business Features Editor Margie Quimpo-Espino

GT Tower Inauguration
see backpage of this section

ANATOMY OF NFA LOSSES

A government firm designed to lose money

By Dennis M. Arroyo
Contributor

A MAJOR cause of the fiscal crisis is the bleeding from government-owned and -controlled corporations (GOCCs). The three that are losing the most are National Power Corp. (Napocor), Light Rail Transit Authority (LRTA), and National Food Authority (NFA)

The NFA is in the news again. This piece will revisit the anatomy of its losses.

Created to sell at a loss

A reasonable businessman would buy at low cost then sell at high prices to make a profit, right? But the National Food Authority has it the other way around: buy high then sell low, for an annual loss.

"We buy palay from the farmers at a higher, subsidized price and at the same time sell (milled rice) at a lower cost to consumers," said NFA Administrator Gregorio Tan Jr.

That is, NFA provides a floor price for rice farmers. The NFA buys palay (unhusked rice) from farmers and traders at above-market rates. Then it sells milled rice to the public at below market rates.

Buying rice from the farmers at a high price, and selling to consumers at a low price, has resulted in massive losses. The national government has been subsidizing the NFA every year, draining funds that could have been put to better use.

Massive bleeding

The agency owes P25 billion, and in 2003, it lost P7.6 billion. Actually, the NFA was not designed to make money for the government. It only has to recover 65 percent of its expenses from buying palay.

This twist has led to huge subsidies for the NFA. For example, the national budget allotted around a billion pesos to the NFA in 2000.

Tariff revenue for the government is also lost. When the NFA imports rice, the tariff for rice is waived.

From 1995 to 2000, these foregone tariff revenues averaged P4 billion per year, according to economist Bruce Tolentino. That was about 60 percent of the 1999 Department of Agriculture budget for rice and corn.

Funding a bleeding agency drains the national budget.

The leaks lose money that could be put to better use in irrigation and farm to market roads. Because of production lags, the nation has been importing rice.

With a few exceptions, the Philippines has been a net importer of rice for the past 135 years.

Rice here is more expensive

While the average Vietnamese eats 165 kilos of rice per year, a Filipino consumes only 95 kilos. High rice prices squeeze workers, and they lead to malnutrition among the bottom poor.

Filipinos buy less rice because it is costly—it is two to almost three times more expensive than that sold by Thailand or Vietnam. For example, well-milled rice here costs P16.53 per kilo in 2001. Compare that with the equivalent prices in Vietnam (P6.36) and Thailand (P7.54).

Rice here is so costly that the poor don't buy enough of the cheapest variety. The NFA deploys some rolling stores to urban poor communities and sells rice at P16 per kilo. And yet even in these areas, NFA stocks are not sold out. This implies that the poor find the rice to be costly. The NFA has thus resorted to selling in half-kilo bags.

Crack the monopoly

There is a great need to break monopoly control over these rice imports.

Anyone who has taken Economics 11 knows that monopolies limit supply and raise prices. This is exactly what's happening in the rice market.

Wielding NFA monopoly power, the government sets limits to the rice imports. Not just anyone can bring in half-priced Thai rice. The barrier prevents rice prices in the Philippines from falling to global levels.

Worse, the program has hardly touched the millions of Filipino rice farmers. Each year, over the past decade, the NFA has procured only around 3 percent of total rice production. Each year only 67,000 rice farmers—out of 3 million—have directly benefited from the support price.

Another path to food security

Suppose the NFA did not embark on its rice purchases, what would happen then to

A GOVERNMENT/ B2-3

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Can linkage banking bolster rural finance?

MAPPING THE FUTURE

Antonio T. Hernandez

JUST what is linkage banking about? What is there for the players—and more so the ultimate beneficiaries—that should make linkage matter? How do we bring about sound linking of the countryside intermediaries to the formal and broader banking system of the country?

Gov't can't do it alone

With the aftermath of the Asian financial crisis, the initiatives of WTO, and the demands of micro-finance, we now know better that government alone cannot overcome the challenges faced by the country, more so our marginalized brothers who constitute the greater number. It needs the active participation of each and every Filipino, as well as the networking amongst institutions and private groups that have a stake in the country's welfare. To this linkage comes to mind. The strategy of linkage with local financial institutions and self-help groups, translates more or less in a three-pronged process:

1. Improving the access of rural people to credit from commercial sources through local intermediaries;
2. Integrating local financial institutions into the national financial market; and
3. Enabling banks to reach out to small holders and micro entrepreneurs as a new market segment.

To put things in perspective, let's first take a glimpse of our rural financial set-up.

Rural finance sector

Like other rural financial systems, the Philippines is essentially composed of two traditional sectors, namely the formal and the informal. The formal is composed of the following:

- Countryside banking institutions (i.e., rural banks, thrift banks, commercial banks with rural presence);
- Non-bank institutions (i.e., credit cooperatives, credit-granting NGOs, pawnshops, finance companies, pension funds and lending investors)
- Government-sponsored non-bank financial entities which provide guarantee and insurance services to agriculture (e.g., Quedan and Rural Credit Guarantee Corp. and Philippine Crop Insurance Corp.).

The informal group involves those without financing licenses but extend credit (in rural areas specially) either directly or indirectly such as traders, input dealers, friends, neighbors, relatives and money lenders.

Past surveys indicate that the formal sector only shares about 40 percent of total rural household credit and the balance of 60 percent is undertaken by the informal creditors. The greater challenge to the formal sector now is to tilt the balance and eventually seize the initiative to expand its social participation in pushing for equitable development especially in the rural economy.

Formal lending to agricultural production has been increasing over the years in absolute amounts (i.e., P31.2 billion in 1989 to P81.01 billion in 1998 to P149.86 billion in 2002). In contrast, percentage performance in terms of share to total loans granted by the banking sector show a decline from 6.6 percent share in 1989 to 2.18 percent in the same period.

This decline is attributed essentially to the low absorptive capacity of rural enterprises when compared to the industry and the service sector. Time and again, the latter tends to capture greater share of the total loans granted by the formal banking sector, whether this be in terms of absolute amounts or in terms of share to total loans granted.

This picture shows the importance of capacity building and institutional strengthening of rural enterprises over credit. However, these are activities which do not generally interest private commercial banks for they entail cost with no assurance of worthwhile returns on investment. Unfortunately, the resources of NGOs intended for this type of strategic intervention is still inadequate.

Capacity building urgency

In one symposium on Philippine rural finance, the Agricultural Credit and Policy Council (ACPC) suggested that the rural sector needs to build up rural enterprise capacity: specifically, to organize, plan out and manage bigger projects that will transform them into processors and not merely as suppliers of raw materials. It will also help if they can be introduced to higher value crops than maintaining traditional crops. Another is if they can be introduced to higher technology that will give them higher yields.

Interestingly, the ACPC report claims "that there is empirical evidence that changes (increases or decreases) in the volume of credit is significantly determined by changes in output or productivity. Declines or increases in productivity (measured by gross domestic products or GDP) precede the declines or increases in bank loans. Clearly therefore, the decline in number of farmer-borrowers and in amount of agricultural loans are the effects rather than the cause of slow growth in agricultural productivity."

Deposit-taking

In the field of deposit-taking, thrift banks and rural banks trail behind the commercial banks in sourcing deposits. While the latter's gross loans to total deposits ratio in 2002 showed a relationship of 0.78:1, the thrift and rural banks showed a higher ratio of 0.88:1 and 0.90:1 respectively.

Obviously, thrift and rural banks have to be more active and more competitive in mobilizing savings in their respective areas. They need to be given access to other investment alternatives that will allow them reasonable risk and generate a decent positive spread on deposit interest expense paid to depositors which should also be at levels that protect the real worth of the depositors' savings. Indeed, rural institutional competitiveness counts as a priority intermediation concern.

Complementation synergy

Given the apparent long-term development and short-term profit conflict in dealing with rural finance, the rationale for complementation as a means to effectively reach out to the countryside hovers largely in the horizon. Complementation is achieved in the sense that efforts toward quality and sustainable outreach will have to draw from the inherent value-adding and mutually reinforcing characteristics of players. Characteristics that, sometimes, if not often, are intrinsic and peculiar to each partner. This leads one to think of a need for a unifying entity, better still a Synergizing Bank for countryside linkage with the vision and the resource, the programs and the drive, the integrity and the resolve.

In general, the Synergizing Bank will be a harmonizing factor in rural finance, dedicated toward the building of stronger and more reliable countryside financial partners (rural banks and credit societies) who subscribe to the same development philosophy. The envisaged Synergizing Bank shall offer its rural financial partners a bundle of products and services that will enable them to function sustainably and to effectively reach out to the rural poor.

Systematic standard

Through a systematized financial linkage among a large number of independent rural financial partner-retailers, the variety of products made available would complete a full range of banking service network. This network will have the needed familiarity and flexibility at the rural level on the one hand and, the capability to offer and handle full commercial banking services on the other, which could render traditional branch banking practically obsolete. Stretching this further, we can even optimistically run it across country borders.

Achieving economy of scale through coordinated common services is a major strategy for the expansion of rural financial services and institutions. Common services may include interest articulation, policy dialogue, training, consultancy, self-regulation, liquidity exchange, research, information dissemination and donor connectivities for creating autonomous apex funds for equity participation in micro-finance institutions.

Benefits to rural partners

In simple terms, the Synergizing Bank provides its rural financial partners with opportunities for mobilizing savings, managing liquidity, financial and payment system services that will enable them to compete and prosper in an open market.

The rural financial partners-retailers may expect from the Synergizing Bank the following:

- In their deposit taking activity: a variety of investments for their surplus funds (excess local deposits not loaned) including variable-rate and fixed rate certificates, with varying maturities, as well as overnight accounts.
- In medium/long term lending activity: an arranger (loan syndication) for financial partners to band themselves and create an even larger lending network from different rural areas. This should allow rural partners to diversify their loan portfolio into different geographical areas thereby improving portfolio mix and spreading credit risk.
- In liquidity management: credit lines that can serve as cash reserves when the eligible partners' own cash requirement becomes tight due to seasonal cash flows, increased lending activity, or member-withdrawals; fund transfers facility and inter-bank market access.
- In fee-based income improvement: an array of correspondent/payment services to improve asset conversion cycles, improve response time, expand outreach and raise rural income. Conversely, the Synergizing Bank can adopt, as a policy on correspondent service changes, a goal of gradually lowering the correspondent fees as usage grows and per item costs drop correspondingly.
- In capacity building and institutional strengthening: support for the continuous training requirements of existing and soon to be established rural financial and credit partners.
- Improve the linkage of rural finance to the broader system by serving as the credit and information center for micro-credit borrowers.

Microcredit borrowers

The "center" will be the central depository of credit and other related information pertaining to micro credit borrowers. This can be accommodated by optimizing if not expanding the Central Liability Center of the Synergizing Bank. The center may also be expected to serve as an effective tool for lending outfits to collect or, at least, in keeping their accounts on current (restructured) status. By enlisting the names of the past due borrowers into the center's list of delinquent accounts, said borrower can effectively be controlled and disciplined thru declining access to credit until delinquent account is cleared of adverse credit information.

This "center" may even be spun off later on to a subsidiary or autonomous entity with the intention of fully privatizing it, once business volume can justify it. Other options may spring as windows of opportunity unfold.

Role in depressed areas

A most challenging role for the Synergizing Bank to play is to provide financial services to the most depressed areas where private sector will not dare go nor will branch banking survive. This may be addressed thru a variant micro-credit lending concept.

In this customized concept, retired individuals for instance, who possess managerial skills (strategic planning, budgeting, market research and development, KRA setting, performance management and evaluation) hard assets, pensions, established families retiring in any of the first 20 poorest but promising provinces, are encouraged to become "micro-credit lending partners." This lending conduit is seen to

CAN LINKAGE/ B2-7

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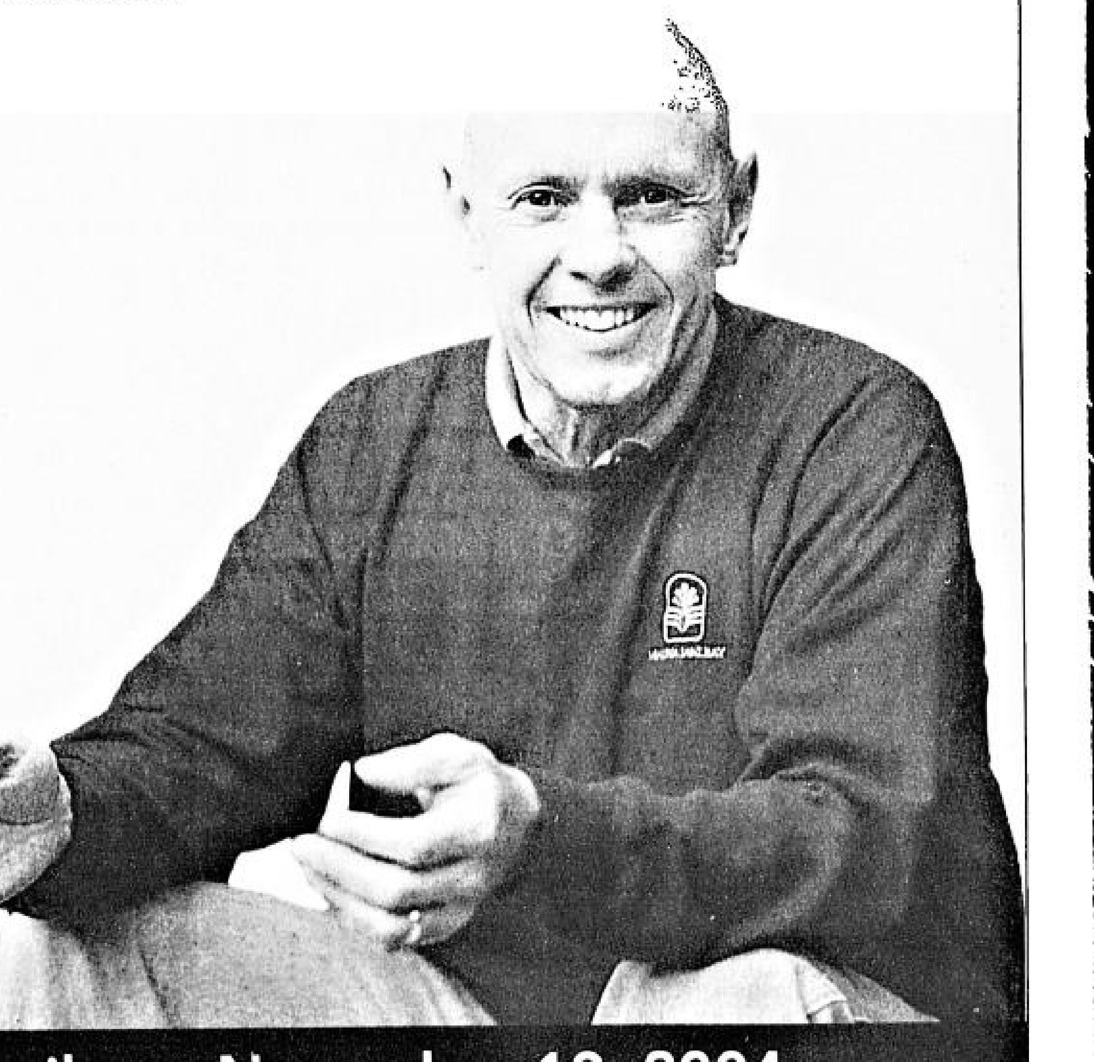

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₱50,000 for a license plate, anyone?

By Clarissa S. Batino

GOING once. Going twice. Sold to the man in checkered shirt.

Priceless artworks are often disposed through public auctions where a cough, a discreet hand movement or even a raised brow could consummate a sale.

In the country's first and likely only auction for vanity plates set on Sept. 29, the Land Transportation Office is tapping international auctioneer Henry Butcher to conduct the sale of 35 of the most sought-after car plate combinations including 88888, 66666 and 99999—the lucky numbers that many Filipino-Chinese are willing to pay good money for.

LTO chief Anneli Lontoc says the agency would also send out invites to the country's affluent car owners and entice them to bid for the one-of-a-kind, five-digit or five-letter plates.

The higher the bids, the more revenue for the government, she adds.

Bidding for each of the vanity plates would start at P50,000 each, says Lontoc. There is, of course, no ceiling and bidders are welcome to cough up as much as they can just so they could rev up in their own vanity plates.

In Shanghai, China, one plate fetched about $4,000 during an auction early this year.

Vanity plates are those bearing letters and numbers that are significant to the vehicle owner. It usually bears the car owner's initial and for Filipino-Chinese, the numbers 6, 8 and 9 are very attractive.

"There is no ceiling. We want to get as much as we can from this exercise because this is the first and maybe also the last unless we think of another combination that would be attractive to car owners," says Lontoc.

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MITSUBISHI
ATT·777
PHILIPPINES 2000

THE GOVERNMENT hopes to raise some P3.5 billion by auctioning off vanity plates in the next five years. Chinese-Filipinos are willing to pay big money for car plate combinations including 88888, 66666 and 99999 – supposed to be lucky numbers.

Originally, the LTO was planning to auction 105 premium plates but in the end narrowed down the list to 35.

"The rest of the 70 could also be auctioned but maybe we would just do it online. We were planning to do a public auction for 105 plates but we were advised that it would take so much time so we decided to just limit it to 35," the LTO chief notes.

Lontoc assures the LTO won't be spending much to pay the auctioneer, aware that criticism against hiring an international group to conduct the sale could be forthcoming.

"We are doing this to raise funds. You would be surprised on how reasonable we are paying the auctioneer. Maybe, I'll disclose the amount after the auction," she notes.

Over a five-year period, the government expects to raise P3.5 billion from the sale of vanity plates.

The LTO had stopped issuing vanity plates in September 2003 after it found out that this had been a source of corruption within the agency. LTO officials said that revenues from the issuance of vanity plates in the past had not filled the government's coffers.

The LTO had classified the vanity plates into three types, depending on their attractiveness.

The limited edition, which are to be auctioned costs at least P50,000 each while the premium and select editions are P15,000 and P10,000 each.

The LTO says owners of cars, sports utility vehicles, vintage and collectors' item vehicles, Asian utility vehicle and sports pick up are eligible to apply for vanity plates.

But public utility vehicles, cargo trucks, service vehicles such as those being used in hotels, car rentals, ambulance, funeral hearse and tourist vehicles, government vehicles and diplomatic cars were not qualified to apply for the special plates.

Owners of limited edition plates have the right to choose and "lock out" certain license plate combinations. This means that no other vehicle owner can choose the same combination again.

Premium plates could bear the motorist's chosen three-letter and three-number alphanumeric combination.

For instance, a car owner can opt to have his license plate with the combination CSB 888 instead of settling for the regular plate that the LTO issues.

Select edition plates could bear the motorist's name, some common words that are no shorter than four characters and no longer than six characters, or any other alphanumeric combination that can be found in the LTO's catalog of pre-determined combinations.

The vanity plates have no expiration date unless cancelled by LTO. This should be used with regular license plates and should be placed at the rear portion of the vehicle, super-imposed or on top of the regular plate.

The issuance of the IRR followed a Presidential Memorandum 65 released last year, which authorized the Transportation Department through the LTO to issue personalized license plates in a bid to boost government income.

A government . . .

From page B2-1

food security? Let's say there was a shortage in the harvests of Luzon. Food security is guaranteed when anyone can import rice from any country in the world. The policy of allowing more farmers to import rice is a step in the right direction.

The NFA would then stop bleeding precious funds from the national government. Use the money earned and saved to invest in irrigation. That will hike the farmers' yields in the future.

Comments to dennisarroyo@yahoo.com

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Male Pattern Hair Loss (MPHL) is a medical condition that can be treated. MPHL is the most common form of pattern baldness, affecting about 5% of men by age 20 and about 50% by age 40[1]. Current studies suggest the prevalence of MPHL approaches 87%[1]. MPHL is believed to be caused by the activity of DHT (dihydrotestosterone) in the scalp. Research indicates that by reducing the amount of DHT, further hair loss can be prevented, and in some men hair can be regrown[1]. Today, there is more than one way to treat MPHL. **Your doctor is the best source of information about MPHL treatment.** Don't accept the norm if you can do something about it. Be bold, not bald.

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* Patients who underwent EARLY PROPER MEDICAL TREATMENT in a clinical study reported improvement with their appearance at 5 years, as well as decrease in hair loss and an increase in the amount of hair. (Eur J Dermatol 2002;12:38-49)

1. Libecco JF, Berg Feld WF Expert Opin Pharmacother 2004; 5 (4):933-940

Insurance industry performance update

By Reynaldo A. de Dios
Contributor

ON THE basis of preliminary data obtained from the Insurance Commission, the Philippine insurance industry achieved creditable results in the year 2003.

Overall, the industry generated premiums in the amount of P69.927 billion which was an increase of 14.96 percent over that of the P60.825 billion in 2002.

The non-life sector produced gross premiums totaling approximately P29.72 billion, an impressive growth of 21.16 percent compared to the P24.53 billion registered the previous year. On the other hand, the life sector produced total premium income (new business plus renewal premium) of P40. 21 billion, an improvement of 10.78 percent over the 2002 production of P36.295 billion.

Out of the 100 non-life insurers, the top ten companies garnered P16.52 billion or 55.58 percent of the total gross premiums written. Of these ten non-life insurers, seven are Filipino companies, two are joint-ventures and one is a foreign subsidiary. While the year 2003 can be considered as a relatively good year in terms of premium, the projections for the current year are not expected to fare as well due to the softening or reduction of property insurance rates as a result of intense competition domestically as well as in the global reinsurance markets.

In the case of life insurance, the top ten companies out of 36 licensed insurers were responsible for premium income of P35.821 billion or 89.01 percent of the total insurance market. The balance of 10.9 percent or only P4.386 billion was shared by the 26 other insurers. Of the top ten companies, five are foreign owned, four are domestic and one joint-venture. The five foreign insurers accounted for P22.527 billion or 56.02 percent of the entire production for the year.

Likewise, in the light of the present economic environment, the forecast for the year 2004 is not encouraging. If we factor in the foreign exchange volatility, the life sector will face a difficult year. Although, this has been an often discussed subject, the imposition of excessive taxation on the policyholders of both the life and non-life sectors is certainly a deterrent to the growth and development of the insurance industry as a whole.

(The author is a risk and insurance management consultant)

Ricciardone addresses Asia Society members

US AMBASSADOR to Manila Francis J. Ricciardone recently shared his experiences in Washington and Iraq over the last five and a half months while working on returning sovereignty to the Iraqi people.

The discussion, delivered during a luncheon forum of the Asia Society Philippine Foundation Inc., at the Tower Club, was Ricciardone's first discussion of Iraq's transition to democracy since he returned from Baghdad on a special assignment to set up the new US Embassy in Iraq.

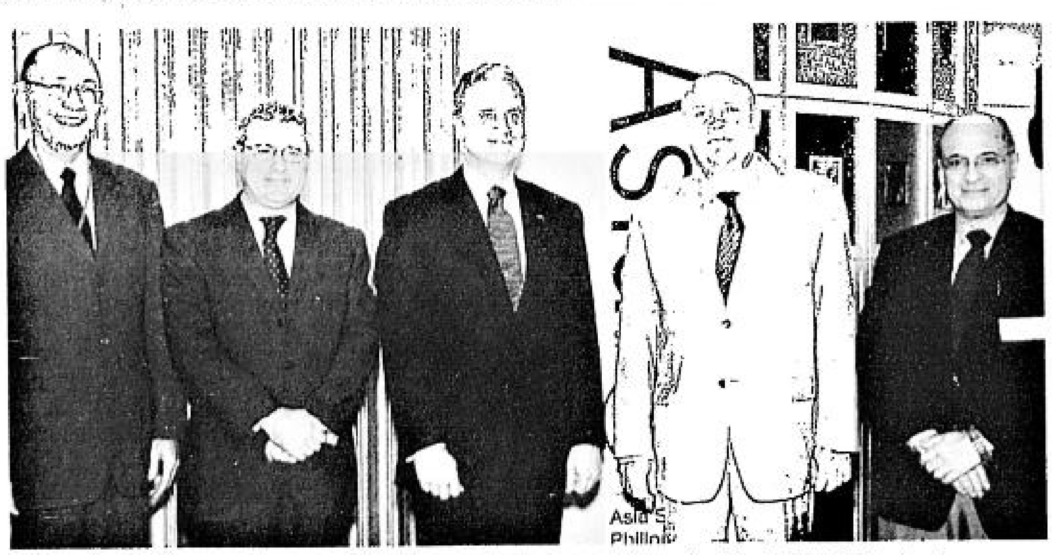
Ricciardone is an honorary trustee of the Foundation.

The luncheon was attended by Asia Society's Trustees—Ricardo Romulo, Luis Virata, Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala.

Asia Society is a non-profit, non-government organization dedicated to fostering understanding about the countries and cultures of the Asia-Pacific Region. Each month the Society presents lectures, programs and events on issues of international political affairs, trade and policy concerns as well as educational and cultural events.

JAIME Augusto Zobel de Ayala shares his views with Ambassador Francis Ricciardone.

RICCIARDONE



ASIA Society executive director Ray Dempsey, Argentina's Ambassador Mario Schuff, Ricciardone, Russian Ambassador Anatoly Nebogatovi and Brazilian Ambassador Claudio Lyra.

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John Maxwell: Inspiring readers, moving crowds

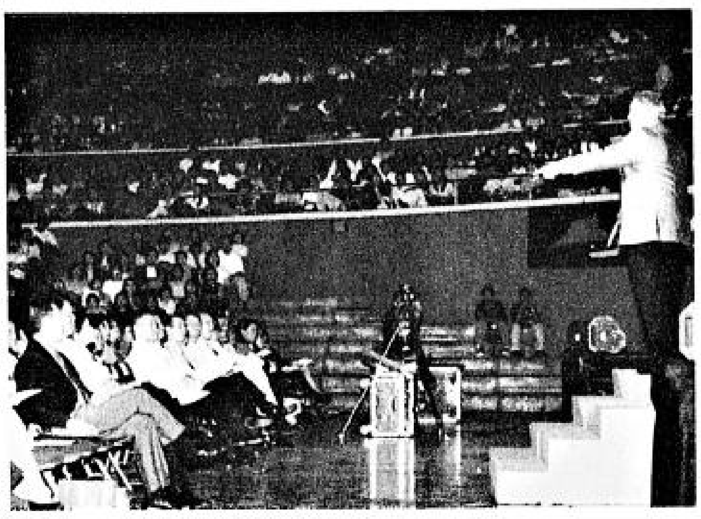
By Dante M. Velasco
Contributor

SPEAKING before a crowd of 25,000.

PHOTOS BY RANDY HORMILLOSA

HAND in hand with INQUIRER president Alexandra Prieto-Romualdez

EVERYBODY wanted an autograph



HE waited 20 minutes so the crowd could move to the vacant front seats.

WHEN a celebrated author speaks before a crowd, he faces the challenge to live up to his or her reputation marked by wit, insight and brilliance. When he fails to "work the room—or hall," people will then shake their heads and say: "He is better read than heard."

That had happened to some management gurus who, when they were heard on audio-tape or seen and heard on television monitors, turned out to be poor speakers. They wouldn't only lull you to sleep but, worse, would make you regret paying a handsome fee to see and hear the author "in the flesh."

An encounter with John C. Maxwell is an exception. The author of several books—notably "The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership" and "The 17 Irrefutable Laws of Teamwork"—Maxwell showed that he is a better speaker than a writer.

That comment could be unfair, since probably, he was first a master of the printed word before he became a virtuoso of modern-day oratory on stage.

You could also say that he was first an expert at the spoken word, because he delivered messages from the pulpit as minister of the Gospel. And yet, it is very likely that he wrote his pulpit pieces well ahead of time—and that makes him a writer first, speaker second.

Well, the issue may not be resolved at all. But it is enough to say that, after listening to and interacting with Maxwell at the Araneta Coliseum as he delivered his inaugural lecture before an estimated 25,000 "Maxwell Enthusiasts"—we cannot be sure anymore where the insightful writer ends and when the spell-binding speaker begins.

I arrived at the coliseum when a speaker who sounded like Francis Kong was dishing out his usual pep talk, with a difference: He was animated. I then realized that, even when I was late (thanks to Bayani Fernando's traffic on Edsa), we were all being treated to "front act speakers."

Anthony Pangilinan, obviously overwhelmed by the crowd, was profuse with superlatives, his voice raised one octave higher. Ardy Roberto was there, but wife Ting-Ting gave a backgrounder and was euphoric with an excited, high-pitched voice. Someone gave an overused and unflattering joke that, while Ardy is "the head," Ting-Ting is "the neck that turns the head."

It must be said, though, that one who appropriately conferred grace and dignity to the moment was INQUIRER president Alexandra "Sandy" Prieto-Romualdez.

She began with a shocker: "John Maxwell does not practice what he preaches!" There was an uneasy pause and silence in the coliseum of 25,000 people. And then the word play that comprises wit captured the essence of the man: "John Maxwell preaches what he practices."

The INQUIRER chief illuminated in two sentences the key to understanding the success of Maxwell: His character emerges in his lectures. "He walks the talk," as they say, and one could sense the passion of the author-speaker to equip all leaders to lead teams powerfully.

A book reviewed at INQUIRER'S Executive Read, "Working the Room," gives the advice that, to succeed in a presentation, "you have to reach your audience with both head and heart."

In Maxwell's presentation at the Araneta Coliseum, we heard his heartbeat. Earlier, as we considered his "laws," we had read his mind.

Could one rivet the attention of 25,000 people for a one-hour interactive lecture? Maxwell did. Could one achieve almost a hundred percent absorption of what is being said? Maxwell did, with the help of a workbook. Could one deliver a Western joke or tell a story and elicit spontaneous laughter from an Asian audience? Maxwell did, which says much about Filipinos' westernization, but which says such much more about the well-timed wit and powerful story telling skills of the author-speaker.

Caring for the audience

Before he began his lecture, he made sure he could be heard by the last individual at the farthest and topmost corner of the cavernous Coliseum. "Could you hear me?" he asked—to which the crowd shouted "Louder!" And then Maxwell noted that some front seats—reserved for the rich and famous, those who could afford "Patron's" prices—are empty.

He looked at the organizers with the question: "Can't they go down here?" The question sounded like it was said in the "imperative mood," and thus began the exodus of those who paid cheap to finally occupy the pricey ringside seats. And Maxwell waited perhaps 15 to 20 minutes to get the crowd settled.

These are not unnecessary details. As far as Maxwell is concerned, the individual who got his ticket cheap is as important as those to whom thousands of pesos are loose change. Here lies the charisma and credibility of the man. He truly cares for his audience.

We are reminded of Maxwell's Master—and ours—whose heart beats for the crowds who followed him from dusty roads to rugged mountains, from gurgling streams to the stormy Sea of Galilee—just to quench their thirst for truth in His words.

Seated at my left was a lady who was studiously filling up her Workbook for the High Impact Teams Seminar. I figured this must be a ranking lady executive, judging from her regulation dark blue blazer and skirt.

When Maxwell needed assistance to remove the accessories of the lapel microphone attached to his belt, revealing his undershirt and intentionally showing it to the audience, this lady let out a hearty laugh. The crowd, too, roared with lusty glee.

When Maxwell asked everyone to tell a seatmate "I feel good about doing good," the lady turned to me and uttered the words with a radiant smile, like she really meant it! Like the lady beside me, everyone was enjoying the interaction.

She turned out to be Dulce, the singer whose voice has soul and power. I was introduced to her by the man at my right—Bishop Cesar Punzalan. I initially could not place her—so when Czar said, "This is Dulce," I quickly replied, "But of course!" And she was there listening to—and interacting with—Maxwell, her kindred soul. Dulce is now busy touring country and the USA, singing Gospel songs in concerts.

Interactive lecture

The entire interactive lecture was well worth thousands of pesos. Those who shelled out only P100 had returns more than a hundred-fold.

Truths about leading teams came down like falling stars from the heavens, if you please excuse the exuberance of my language. Some truths came as a surprise because they challenge traditional beliefs. For example, Maxwell said: "Quit working on your weakness; work on your strengths."

This advice is contrary to conventional wisdom that we work on our weaknesses. "If you cannot sing, don't try to learn singing: that's unfair to you and to your audience!" From the corner of my eye, I saw Dulce (she with a powerful singing voice) nodding, rather cautiously, not meaning to offend non-singers.

Seven laws

Quoting Chuck Swindoll, Maxwell told the story of animals trying to learn things they do badly. Imagine a rabbit working on its swimming skills, or the squirrel with a burning ambition to fly!

Maxwell listed these Seven Laws to Empower Your Team:

The Law of Significance (One is Too Small a Number to Achieve Greatness), the Law of the Big Picture (The Goal Is More Important than the Role), the Law of the Niche (All Players Have a Place Where They Add Most Value), the Law of Mt. Everest (As the Challenge Escalates, the Need for Teamwork Elevates, the Law of the Edge (The Difference Between Equally Talented Teams is Leadership), and the Law of High Morale (When You're Winning, Nothing Hurts).

Maxwell admitted that, at the start, he failed many times at assembling a team. "So, don't be discouraged if you get difficult team members, at first," he said. But, you must have a team. Nothing is successfully done alone. Oh? In another speaking engagement, a member of a crowd said Charles Lindberg went solo in his flight around the world. To such a point, Maxwell said: Wasn't there a team who built his airplane?

"Teamwork makes the dream work," is a theme that Maxwell was repeating at the lecture. He also underscored the need to see "the big picture"—and clearly communicate a vision clearly to your team.

As I noted the preparations made for the seminar, the sponsors who came forward to support it (like the INQUIRER and a few others), the giant monitor plus satellite monitors inside the coliseum, the management of sights and sounds hardware/software, the support systems of workbooks, ticketing, lunches, book sales—and the participation of big and small guns—Maxwell's law of dreaming big with big teams was actually at work.

The 25,000-strong crowd at the coliseum and smaller, but no less excited, Maxwell fans at the PICC show that big things happen when the teams assembled are equal to the tasks.

And yet there is an X-factor to the Maxwell Event. When the sound system didn't seem to work at first, when the crowds were shouting that they couldn't hear Maxwell's words—I saw Ting-Ting a few seats at my left at the front row, near Sandy Prieto, with closed eyes, holding the hand of a friend. She was praying.

Mustering such a crowd, crowning it with success with consequent seamless flow, and even getting the best and the finest from John Maxwell—was a huge success. I would have believed Anthony Pangilinan that Ardy's wife Ting-Ting was the neck that turns the head.

But what I saw, a few meters away from where I sat, was Ting-Ting was actually a pair of knees. And when those knees were bended, Someone greater than John Maxwell took charge. And that made all the difference that fateful and inspiring night.

Good marks for Meco after three years of Taiwan Plan

WHEN a new team took over at the Manila Economic and Cultural Office three years ago, it had to hit the ground running and quickly set about the task of overhauling the organization and repairing ties with Taiwan.

Relations between the close neighbors had soured over an aviation dispute, significant trade and Taiwanese investments were in jeopardy and the organization suffered from a poor public image as an ineffective office.

It was a big challenge, and one that the new leadership under former diplomat Ambassador Antonio Basilio has successfully met through what it calls the "Taiwan Plan."

The revamped Meco helped arrest a slide in trade figures and put two-way trade back on a healthy growth track. Today, traffic in goods and services between the two countries stands at $4.201 billion a year, compared to $4.097 billion in 2001.

Exports to Taiwan during the first semester rose 17 percent from the same period last year. This compares favorably to the steep decline experienced in 2001 when exports dropped 15 percent. Restoring healthy trade is a key accomplishment, given that the Philippines enjoys a situation of trade surplus with its fifth biggest trade partner.

As the result of effective work by Meco in touting the Philippines as investment destination, Taiwanese have also resumed investing significantly in the Philippines notwithstanding political and global uncertainties.

Healthier economic ties

In 2000 they invested $12.97 million here. In 2002 they poured $82.833 million, more than in any other Southeast Asian country, mostly to expand their manufacturing base in the Philippines. For the first time in many years, the Philippines could claim to have topped its Asean neighbors in securing outward investment from Taiwan.

Taiwanese are heading south for R&R in greater numbers also, as a result of Meco's promotion efforts and its successful lobby to maintain abundant direct air links with Taiwan. When those links had been abruptly cut in 1999, visitor arrivals from the Philippines' fourth largest tourism market had plunged by half to only 75,000 a year.

After Meco's troubleshooting, tourist numbers recovered steadily, rising to 85,231 in 2001 and 103,000 in 2002 despite the impact of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, before declining briefly last year because of SARS. Arrivals have already hit 58,447 halfway into 2004, on track to hit their highest level in three years.

Effective diplomacy by Meco at the height of the crisis helped stave off a move by Taipei to limit hiring of Filipino workers. As a result, more OFWs have been hired by Taiwanese firms and households, with the total number increasing to 68,877 in November 2002, 81,355 as of December 2003 and 86,050 as of May 2004.

A new corporate structure

To achieve all this, management had to reinvent Meco. A new corporate structure, with the chair as chief executive officer and where there is a chief finance officer, provided better management and supervision of distant operations in three cities in Taiwan and in Manila. Redundant positions were cut and personnel were moved where they would be more efficient.

Board directors became actively involved in operations, with each one assigned a specific area of concern to oversee.

And it had to institute these administrative reforms while at the same time realigning the whole cost structure to the new reality of lower revenues as visa applications, its only source of funds, had fallen off with the slump in travel.

In a key move for greater operational efficiency, Basilio ordered more training to upgrade employee skills. The additional training—in such things as protocol, Chinese language skills, immigration laws, even driving—motivated staff and greatly improved the whole organization's capability to provide services.

In turn, a well-prepared and more dedicated staff was better able to deliver on their mission to protect and provide for the welfare of OFWs in Taiwan. With a total staff of only 24, some making themselves available on phone lines and help desks on a nearly 24-hour basis, Meco vastly increased the assistance it gives to over 130,000 Filipino nationals in Taiwan.

Improved labor services

Over a two-year period, Meco helped thousands of Filipinos recover over NT$100 million in monetary claims from their brokers and employers. This is a conservative estimate considering that some of the claims—unpaid wages, illegal deductions, tax refunds and excessive fees—are difficult to document.

The office also set up regular livelihood training for OFWs, strengthened a direct hiring program, increased resources to its Assistance to Nationals Unit, and published and provided OFWs, a helpful guidebook on Taiwan laws and customs.

Little changes have also added to major improvement on capabilities. A renovation of office premises in Taiwan and redesign of forms to include Chinese translation of English instructions have transformed Meco into a vastly more user-friendly office.

Computerization, particularly of fiscal and consular operations, let Meco cut visa processing from four days to six hours while improving security from fraud and generating savings.

Helping to improve Taiwan's perception of Philippine conditions is the effective and aggressive communication program now being run by Meco.

An information center in Taipei was set up to provide constant interaction with media, and a website in both English and Chinese languages provides periodic updates and a window to business, tourism and special events in the Philippines.

The office also runs a regular Sunday column in a leading Taiwan newspaper and a Sunday radio talk show, Radyo Pinoy, which serves as a portal for news and discussions among the Filipino community.

Under Basilio's chairmanship and in the face of tremendous odds, Meco has delivered on its mission and successfully placed the country's relations with Taiwan on firmer footing.

Bank makes bond investing easy, attractive

EQUITABLE PCI Bank is stepping up efforts to bring the benefits of bond investing to a wider market, encouraged by the growing number of retail investors seeking better returns on their idle dollars.

The country's third biggest banking group has spruced up its dollar-denominated bond investment product—wrapping it in terms easier to grasp, giving it a brand name, Maxihedge, a first in local banking, and making it widely available through its branches.

Maxihedge offers investors the opportunity to participate in high-yield Philippine corporate or sovereign bonds. It presents a convenient investment opportunity in a foreign currency.

The investment in these longer term bonds, which provide steady coupon income every six months, offers much higher yields than ordinary bank time deposits.

EPCIBank has set a low minimum investment to make it available to a wider spectrum of investors. For as little as $25,000, an investor can gain participation in sovereign Philippine bonds (which carry the guarantee of the government), Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas bonds or the bonds of corporate blue chips.

Foreign currency-denominated bond products have been available to local investors for some time but started gaining wider acceptance only in 2002.

"The take-up we have seen for the product since we started selling it has been nothing but extraordinary," said EPCIBank president & CEO Rene J. Buenaventura. "Our judgment that local investors have become more sophisticated and are now ready for this kind of product is nicely bearing out."

"Bonds make sense in ways local investors increasingly appreciate," said executive vice-president Bienvenido M. Juat Jr., head of EPCIBank's award-winning Treasury Group. "We hope to help popularize it as a top choice for personal investment."

Besides superior return, an added appeal is the fact that while the bonds have medium- to long-term maturities, the liquidity of these instruments continue to grow. If the need arises, investors can sell the bonds at the prevailing market rates.

Equitable PCI Bank marks its 54th year of existence this 2004. It is presently the country's third largest banking group, enjoying leadership in corporate and commercial banking, credit and payment cards, remittances, leasing and investment banking. It has over 400 branches and close to 500 FASTeller ATMs nationwide, with access to 4,000 BancNet, MegaLink and ExpressNet ATMs.

With its continued growth and strong bank franchise, Equitable PCI Bank is fast moving forward, fully committed to be the "Bank of Choice" for customers nationwide.

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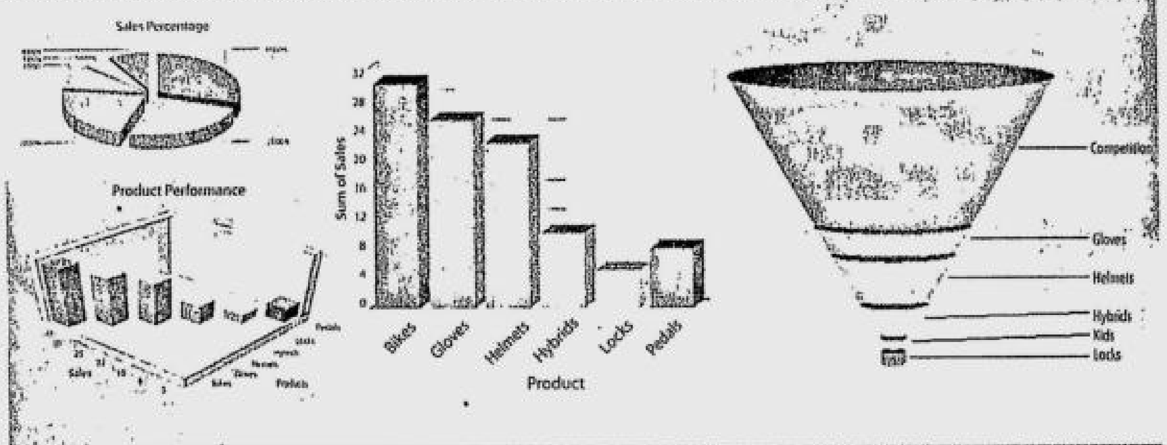

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DEAL SIGNING. Fortinet Inc. recently appointed Lamco International to be the distributor of its network security products. Lamco is a leading distributor of IT products in the country and Fortinet is the manufacturer of FortiGate—a series of ASIC-accelerated anti-virus firewalls. Present during the signing were Lamco VP for sales and marketing Richard T. Ching; Lamco SVP for sales and marketing Betty Ng; Lamco EVP and GM Rosa Yu; Fortinet managing director for Hong Kong and Southeast Asia Tommy Tam;Philippine country sales manager of Fortinet Michael Poyaoan and Lamco AVP for sales and marketing Marvin Gerard L. Ti.

Low-cost, Web-based learning now available

INSTEAD of spending for expensive reviewer classes to prepare your child for a better chance to get into the school she or he wants, why not go for an online reviewer?

Traditional review schools charge from P2,500 to P8,000 for six to eight weeks, equivalent to about 16 to 20 hours of after-school or weekend classes. It is however inconvenient and curtails added costs because parents also need to arrange additional transportation for their children's reviewer classes.

A new knowledge building portal, MyReviewerOnline.com, is now in the market offering graduating students this academic year with a cheaper, more effective system of preparing for high-school or college entrance examinations. Students can even learn within the comfortable confines of their own homes.

"We believe that web-based learning is a more effective and efficient system of building a body of knowledge needed to hurdle the competitive entrance tests," according to Dennis Gamboa, general manager of eHighway I.T. Inc., a local web designer and developer.

Guided by this belief, Gamboa—with the support of partners PLDT, Araneta Center, Cinnabon and Philam Life Plans—commissioned thousands of questions from math, science and language teachers from reputable secondary and tertiary schools for MyReviewerOnline.com. .

The learning portal also contains explanations and solutions to questions. Levels are also an added feature to guide students to move from the less difficult questions to the more advanced. A student can opt to work on building his knowledge base, for example in mathematics or vocabulary, by working for 30 minutes every day depending on his attention span and concentration. This way, he tailor fits the learning environment to suit his personal style and ability.

Enrollment in MyReviewerOnline.com is through pre-paid cards with values from P200 (for 600 minutes or 10 hours), and P500 (for 1,800 minutes or 30 hours) of actual time usage. Interested pre-paid card distributors may call 817-9092 or 812-0250 for details.

Opportunities for baby needs' suppliers set

FIRMS involved in the manufacture of products or provision of services for babies and pregnant women have a chance to showcase their goods at the Baby Magazine 3rd National Baby Congress on Oct. 2-3, 2004, at the Shangri-la Plaza Mall.

A few more selling booths are available for the event which is expected to draw over 100,000 mall goers. Call 893-0534 or 840-1897 for details.

Sponsors of the event include HSBC, Gingersnaps, Metrobank, Canon, Sun Village Resorts, Burger King, Richwell Trading, Vernel.

Highlight of the event is a Search for Cover Baby for Baby Magazine. Free talks on parenting are scheduled in the two-day event.

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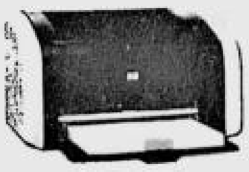

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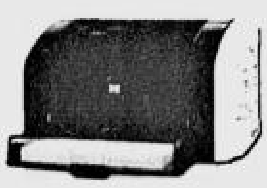

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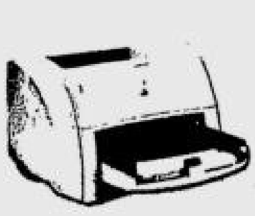

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Philam Plans pays P33M in education benefits for September

PHILAM Plans Inc, the country's leading pre-need company, is paying P33 million worth of education benefits to its 4,055 college student nominees this September alone, in time for the opening of the second semester of the school year. Philam Plans pays through its direct-to-planholder payment scheme, which provides flexibility for the planholder and his family on the use of these matured funds.

Philam Plans president Jesus G. Hofileña reports this amount represents a 32-percent increase from the total education benefits paid by the company for its college scholars during the same period last year.

Philam Plans, the undisputed leader in pre-need for the past two years, continues to reflect increases in its pre-need sales and total plan count.

It is now the top pre-need provider of education plans in the country, based from the January to July 2004 pre-need data from the Actuarial Advisers Inc. It claimed the biggest market share of 24 percent in education plans with an aggregate sales value of P1.96 billion, up from its 17-percent market share a year ago.

"We take great pride to have taken the leadership position in the education plan category, and thank our planholders for their continued patronage and trust in our company," said Hofileña.

Aggressive marketing efforts and continuous innovation in products and services take the credit for the company's steady showing in pre-need volume sales and market share.

"In spite of the industry slowdown, Philam Plans remains on top of its business goals and in the best shape to meet its obligations to all its planholders," said Hofileña.

Since January of this year, Philam Plans has paid more than P100 million in total education benefits for its 6,000 plus scholars. The company has earlier paid P67.5 million in education benefits to its student nominees during the start of the first semester of this school year. It will pay an additional P1 million worth of benefits to about 115 more planholders in the last quarter of the year.

Under the direct-to-planholder payment scheme, Philam Plans gives the benefit checks directly to the planholder before the opening of the semester for college beneficiaries and before the opening of the school year for elementary and high school. This gives them the flexibility to allocate finances among education expenses such as tuition, school projects and other items.

As special premium for their Philam Plans' Gold Education plan, the education benefits that planholders receive increase by 15 percent every year to protect parents against tuition increases. On top of that, Philam Plans also guarantees the return of the full price of the plan as a gift to the student nominee after graduation from school.

Latest data from the Securities and Exchange Commission also confirmed that Philam Plans is the over-all pre-need leader for the first seven months of 2004, a telling sign of its imminent claim to pre-need leadership by the end of the year.

As of July 2004, Philam Plans' trust fund stood at P12.6 billion, the bulk of which are invested in secured and liquid investments such as long-term government securities. Such prudent investment and sound financial management allows Philam Plans to fully comply with the regulations and investment mix requirements set by the SEC.

Trust funds represent the future benefit obligations of Philam Plans to its planholders as specified in their plan contracts.

On its own, Philam Plans strives to adhere to good corporate governance at all times, ensuring above-standard practices in all level of its operations to protect the trust and confidence given by its planholders. Its pre-need product portfolio in pension, education and life is among the best in the industry, and it has one of the most extensive distribution facilities nationwide.

Philam Plans' professional business practices and reputation for financial stability and security stems from its unique international affiliation with two industry leaders: Philamlife, the country's No. 1 life insurance company; and American International Group, the leading US-based international insurance organization.

HP SUPPORTS WWF

HP Philippines continues to push its local philanthropic initiatives as it participates in the Corporate Partners Program of World Wide Fund for Nature-Philippines, one of the largest and most credible conservation organizations in the country. HP donated computer and printer units to eight select schools in Isabela, Sorsogon, Cagayan and Palawan for their conservation and environmental education. A notebook and all-in-one printer donation will also support WWF's Project SEA (Schools for Environmental Action) as it undertakes activities targeting primary and secondary schools. Sealing the agreement with a handshake are Nilo S. Cruz (left), HP Philippines' managing director and Jose Ma. Lorenzo Tan, WWF-Philippines president.

Diabetic patients to benefit from losartan

DIABETIC nephropathy is the most common cause of chronic kidney failure and end-stage kidney disease worldwide. People with both type 1 and type 2 diabetes are at increased risk. Diabetic nephropathy, which is characterized by the loss of the kidney's ability to function properly in excreting the body's waste products, is a potential complication in 20 to 40 percent of patients with diabetes.

Aside from control of blood sugar levels, another main focus of therapy in diabetic nephropathy is a tight control of the blood pressure. Once nephropathy develops, the greatest rate of progression is seen in patients with poor control of their blood pressure. Uncontrolled high blood pressure will worsen kidney, eye, and blood vessel complications in the body.

Controlling high blood pressure has been shown to be an effective way of slowing kidney damage from diabetic nephropathy. The spillage of protein in the urine called proteinuria, which can be measured by simple laboratory tests, is a strong indicator for the presence of nephropathy. Guidelines have progressively revised the target BP goal downwards, currently at 125/75 mmHg in patients with more than one gram proteinuria. Angiotensin receptor blockers (ARB) are now recommended by various guidelines as a first-line kidney-protective antihypertensive therapy.

Losartan, a drug that belongs to the ARB class, has been shown by several clinical trials to have renal effects in patients with diabetes and nephropathy. The landmark Losartan Intervention for Endpoint Reduction in Hypertension (LIFE) trial, which studied a subset of diabetic patients with clinical albuminuria and mean serum creatinine concentrations, two markers of renal function.

In this subgroup study of patients with diabetes, albuminuria was reported significantly less often in the losartan than in the atenolol group. It was also shown in the trial that losartan therapy prevented more new-onset diabetes than atenolol.

Similarly, in the Renaal (Reduction in Endpoints in NIDDM with the AII Antagonist Losartan), it was shown that ARBs have proven efficacy compared with placebo in a composite endpoint consisting of a doubling of serum creatinine concentration, end-stage renal disease or death, and in the onset of diabetic nephropathy. The study concluded that ARBs are a first-line treatment for patients with type 2 diabetes and nephropathy.

Control of hypertension in patients with diabetic nephropathy improves mortality and slows progression to end-stage renal disease. However, blood pressure is difficult to treat. Among other things, a diabetic patient with hypertension is facing a life-long medication that could hurt him financially. The high price of medicine is often the reason patients become non-compliant to their treatment regimen.

An affordable brand of losartan was recently launched in the market. This new brand, marketed at almost half the price of the originator product, had undergone bioequivalence test and was reported to be "bioequivalent with the innovator brand".

The introduction of an affordable and effective losartan is part of the pharmacoeconomics program, which aims to make medicines more affordable to every Filipino.

'MAGPAKABERDE KA'-FHM MEETS PBA

La Salle Greenhills High School Batch 1980 Foun'Magpakaberde ka'-FHM Girlfriends meet PBA Gameboys on Sept. 20, 7 p.m. at the NBC tent. This is a concept party with games, prizes. Cocktails, music and dance showcasing a rare casting coup of FHM models, PBA players, celebrity entertainers and La Salle alumni performers. Proceeds of the party will help raise funds for the benefit of the La Salle High School Batch 80 scholars to the LSGH Adult Night High School. The Adult Night High School is the pioneering effort of La Salle Greenhills to spread its mission of Christian education especially to less fortunate fellow Filipinos who seek to complete their education. This program has been ongoing for more than 20 years. LSGH Batch 80 Foundation seeks to support 25 new scholars into this program to coincide with its 25th batch anniversary on Feb. 5, 2005. The steering committee is chaired by Ram Antonio with the support of batchmates Nando Pahati, Sander Tantoco, Rico Meneses, Popo Suanes, Carling Santos, Algene del Rosario. Tickets are available at P500 and VIP P2000 at the La Salle Greenhills Alumni office, Ticketworld, FHM office and the PBA office.

ProductFILES

Raise your arms with confidence

THE HOT, humid weather gives everyone an excuse to wear flimsy, daring tops. You may look svelte and flattering in spaghetti straps, tube tops, sleeveless shirts, and bandeaus-but are your underarms up for it? There's nothing more embarrassing than raising your beautiful white arms to reveal dark, discolored armpits!

Let White Result deodorants give you the maximum deo-whitening results you need. They whiten underarms safely, because it uses natural ingredients. Tawas is an acknowledged whitening ingredient that has been used by generations in either its rock or powdered form. It also uses licorice, which boosts its whitening capabilities and is scientifically proven to have many long-term benefits. The unique formula combination of licorice and tawas extracts lightens dark underarm skin, while giving all-day protection against odor and underarm wetness.

White Result is available in two forms: the Roll-On Anti-Perspirant Deodorant and the Deodorant Stick. Go conventional with the 60ml roll-on that makes for easy and economical application. Carry the convenient 15g stick that goes on quick and dry anywhere to make sure you always smell fresh. Choose your scent from three variants: Cool, Powder, or Fragrant.

White Result Deodorants are available at Sara Lee Direct Selling Philippines (formerly known as House of Sara Lee) and authorized Sara Lee dealers nationwide. For inquiries, call hotline 810-5402 e-mail customer.relations@saraleedirectselling.ph.

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PLDT WINS SUPERBRANDS 2004 PLATINUM AWARD

PLDT recently bagged the Reader's Digest Superbrands 2004 Platinum Award for being the most trusted and preferred brand for telecommunications services in the country. The awardees were determined through a survey conducted by Reader's Digest across 41 different product categories in six key Asian markets, namely Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand and the Philippines. PLDT was awarded the Platinum award because it achieved a score three times that of the nearest brand and had an average quality rating of more than 4 on a scale of 1 to 5. Shown is PLDT Center head for marketing services Raul Alvarez, 2nd from left, receiving the prestigious award from Simon Cholmeley, Reader's Digest regional advertising director, during the awarding ceremonies. Also shown are, from left, Lirio Sandoval, president of A-Z Direct Marketing (exclusive distributor of Reader's Digest in the Philippines, and Lilet Yan, Reader's Digest Philippines sales director.

The only HVAC/R event set

THE ONLY trade event catering specifically to the heating, ventilating, air-conditioning and refrigerating (HVAC/R) industries will be staging the 7th International HVAC/R Convention and Exhibition on Nov. 11 to 13 at the PICC forum.

Although this year's event is the 7th in a series of successful annual staging of the Philippine Society of Ventilating, Air-conditioning and Refrigerating Engineers (PSVare), it is not until now that the organization's board of directors decided to expand the scope of the event to cover the global HVAC/R industry.

"The board is definitely excited with this development. We all know, to truly promote the HVAC/R industry here in the country, we need to enter the international arena. This has always been the goal of the organization when it started the event in 1998", enthused project chair Pete Guste.

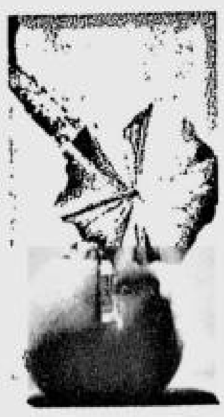
Marketing road shows have already been conducted in neighboring countries in Asia in an obvious effort to get international participation. According to the members and directors of PSVare, the potential for HVAC companies in the country is promising, what with the obvious trend in high-rise building for both residential and commercial purposes.

According to engineer Cesar Punzalan, PSVare president, "This trend should be a good enough reason for HVAC and R companies to participate in this event. It is truly the only venue in the country where they can showcase their products and services to the proper market."

Currently, more than 50 companies form the industry, and their allied sectors have signed up for the exhibit. Aside from the exhibition proper, the event will also feature seminars and proper presentations as part of the convention. For more information about the exhibit and convention, Cut Unlimited may be reached through 687-0654, 687-7523, 687-2955, or e-mail cut@pacific.net.ph or visit www.psvare.org.

'Fancy Flowers, or Leaves?' Ikebana exhibit

THE 15th annual Ikebana exhibit of the Sogetsu Manila Potential Branch will open Oct. 1 and runs until Oct. 3 near the entrance of Glorietta 4, Ayala Center, Makati. "Fancy Flowers…Or Leaves?" is all about using only flowers or only leaves in an Ikebana arrangement. Sogetsu Ikebana, known for its modern arrangements, will once again showcase its flair for the avant garde in this exciting theme. Its members are led by officers Margot Perez, director, Vangie Cheng, deputy director, Emy Dimayuga, secretary, Nancy Uy, treasurer, and honorary adviser Elsa Regala. They are mounting this annual Ikebana exhibit using only leaves of all shapes, sizes and color, or only flowers in exciting combinations in each arrangement, certainly an adventure and a feast for the eyes and spirit.



‘Nature’ entrepreneurs seek strategic alliance

By Myrna Rodriguez-Co
Contributor, UP ISSI

NATURE’S Reflection Inc., managed by Josefina “Pinpin” and Rene Echavéz, makes beautiful and profitable use of leaves, flowers, fiber, twigs and weeds and other materials so abundant in their native Cebu province.

Their company showroom in Talisay City is a visual feast of native lamps, furniture accessories and utility boxes of all sizes, shapes and colors.

Lamps made from handmade paper or resin, these are accessorized with fossilized leaves, dried flowers, coco twigs and bamboo poles light up the showroom.

In designing these lamps, Pinpin, the artist, lets her imagination fly. They run from the ethnic (nipa huts, *salakot*, boats), geometric (including ziz-zags and crescents), nature-inspired (birds and fishes). Earth colors dominate, but pastel and even reflectorized hues are also in demand in the international markets the couple caters to.

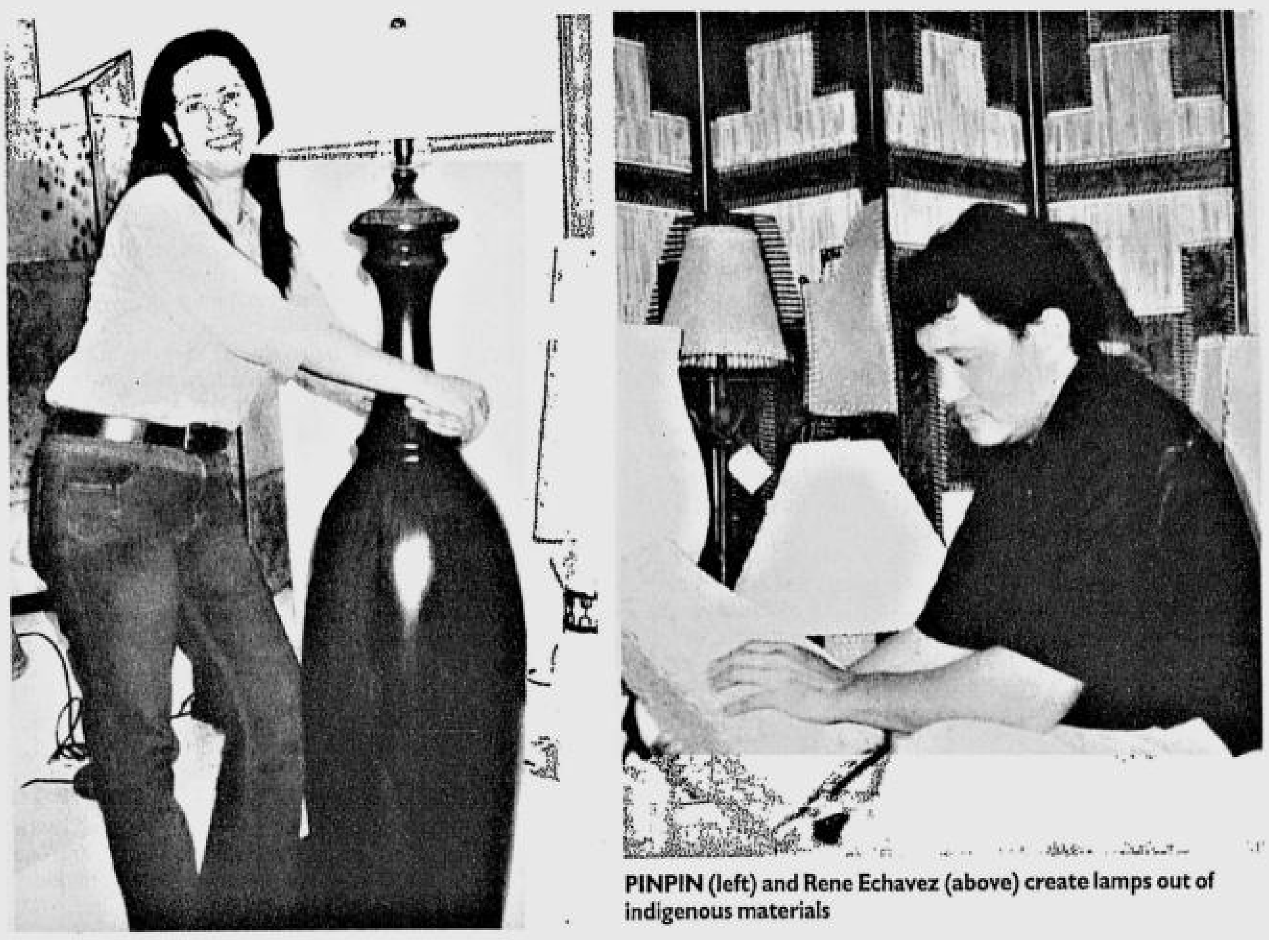
Fun beginning

The couple began Nature’s Reflection in 1997 for the heck of it.

Pinpin was then enjoying her early years of motherhood, while Rene had just come home from two years contract work in Taiwan, they had hoped, “for good.”

When announcements came out about a trade exhibit at Waterfront Hotel at Cebu City, Pinpin was dared by friends to display her famous handcrafted items. “I thought, why not?” she remembers. Her products have been market tested, after all. Her JE TOP Enterprise which she ran years before with two friends in Manila enjoyed a modest following in export markets in the US and Australia.

At the Cebu exhibit, all her items were sold out even before she could set up her booth. Impressed buyers insisted on placing volume orders.


PINPIN (left) and Rene Echavez (above) create lamps out of indigenous materials

Daunting lessons

As the couple buckled down to work on the orders, they were daunted. They lacked skilled craftsmen. But because they had committed to a timetable, they had to make do with a handful of under-trained, under-experienced workers. What followed was a nightmare of almost daily overtime work, wasted materials and rejected products.

The couple must have learned these early lessons well. Today, they have five core workers and a pool of 20 workers—experienced craftsmen who are on call. Their rate of reject has bottomed out to almost 1 percent, thanks to technical assistance of a volunteer from the Canadian Executive Service Office (Ceso).

From a garage operation, Nature’s Reflection is now located in a 5,000 square meter property in Talisay City, leased at P15,000 a month.

Operations are made up of three divisions: handmade paper, wrought-iron and fiberglass. Most processes are done manually. Not too many equipment are needed, except small metal welding machines. When production volume increased beyond their capacity, the couple resorted to subcontracting.

There are four smaller firms to which the couple subcontracts part of the production. Three of these are owned by former workers whom they have encouraged to go into business.

Trade fairs continue to be a boon. They have made it to exhibits in the US and Australia But none offer better opportunities to generate volume orders than the Philippines’ own Citem fairs. Pinpin starts new product development four months before an exhibit opens. The formula is to show at least 50 percent new products each year.

Their market is 99 percent export. The United States is the No. 1 market, followed by Italy, Saudi Arabia, Japan and Hong Kong.

Handicraft is a very competitive business; handicraft for export, doubly so. It requires a commitment to quality, delivery dates and innovation. Exporters have to be ready for business peaks and slumps.

Today, with competition from Taiwan, Vietnam and China, they are experiencing a downturn.

Rene and Pinpin remember the good times and how these turned sour:

Pinpin: “Business was very good in the 1980s. It declined in the 1990s, but it was still quite good. Back then, we could name our price.”

Rene: “By 2000, things had gone downhill. The same dolls that used to sell for $25 a piece we can now sell for only $5.”

They have worker problems, too. Pirating of skilled workers is common in the industry. Pinpin and Rene have lost their craftsmen to competitors overseas—China, Malaysia, Vietnam.

Counterpoints

Between the two of them, Rene and Pinpin seemed to have divided their work neatly. Rene is the general manager who handles marketing, people management and deliveries. Pinpin is the treasurer who at the same time handles design and production management.

Their skills and management styles provide a counterpoint to each other.

Pinpin: “I tend to be more strict with customers than employees. I believe both buyers and suppliers should be faithful to the terms of a contract.”

Rene: “I tend to be more accommodating—which is not always good for the business. Once, I became too friendly with and trustful of a foreign

NATURE/ B2-8

Can linkage . . .

From page B2-2

be low cost, flexible, innovative and can easily be made operational.

As the communities it serves develop, it is envisioned that the partner will grow with it and probably convert its operation into a village bank. Thus, improving the communities’ linkage to the country’s formal banking system.

Benefits to synergizing bank

Is this linkage concept a one-way street? Are there benefits going for the Synergizing Bank?

Learning from our experiences, we’ve discovered that anything which benefits only one of the contracting parties at the expense of another partakes of a subsidy in practice.

We also learned that subsidy favors the beneficiaries only for as long as the playing fields is kept positive for them to thrive. Once the “artificial cover” is removed and market forces are set-free, the beneficiaries easily fall prey as victims.

This leads us to an imperative that must be observed if the system is to subsist in a globalized economy. With this, the question pops up ... What’s in it for the Synergizing Bank? For linkage banking? The answer is: There is much that can be reaped from the arrangement thus:

- A better loan portfolio since lending to end-users are made by rural partners who have better knowledge of the idiosyncracies of the borrowers and business activities that they are in and in of the area;
- Lower transaction cost. Since lending is done on wholesale basis, an economy of scale is achieved that results in lower delivery costs;
- Greater participation of private sector rural entities. With greater participation, there is greater assurance of community’s support to the rural financing system that is being established. With it is a greater appreciation of the necessity for an efficient and effective financial system leading toward the development of a vibrant community;
- Greater fulfillment of the Synergizing Bank’s social responsibility as greater and more organized outreach is achieved. Unnecessary investments in non-earning assets and branching expenses are minimized or eliminated. Duplication of outlets is likewise avoided.

Continuity of linkage

Most importantly, these mentioned benefits will result in greater profitability. With greater profitability comes better people, better technologies and systems that brings ensuing profitability. With this realized, it guarantees the continuous existence of the linkage to pass from one generation to the next, until the nation’s wealth are distributed more equally to the greatest number.

There are institutions and entities in place in the country today. All that is needed is purposeful coordination of the roles each one shall play to galvanize a more cohesive rural financial system; a visionary and selfless outlook which will paddle away from that scenario of duplicative, wasteful and chaotic free-for-all made at the expense of the fund source and the rural poor.

Linkage is ostensibly the way to go. Unity and harmony in any undertaking is essential. With enhanced team play in the rural scene, we will move systematically and faster; without it, we will move “duplicatively” and slower!

(The author is senior vice president of Land Bank of the Philippines. Feedback at mapsec@globenet.com.ph.)

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New PSE chief's game plan: Get more to play

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange has often been referred to as the private sector's equivalent of a snake pit.

The country's bourse, however, found a talented charmer in lawyer Francisco E. Lim, former managing partner of the Accra law office, who took over the PSE's presidency last Sept. 16.

Lim, after all, is nothing, if not tenacious.

And he would need all of his renowned single-minded approach to achieving what he set out to do, as he takes on the formidable job of taking the stock exchange to new heights.

Lim tells the INQUIRER that his game plan is simple: Get more people to play the stock market, convince more blue-chip firms to list on the exchange and introduce reforms to inspire more trust in the PSE.

It took Lim more than a month of soul searching before he committed himself to his vision, saying that heading the PSE was never on his list of career options.

Becoming one of the country's best lawyers, however, always was. The fire of his ambition burned since he was in grade school.

He recalls how, as a young boy, he hung on to every word his father shared about a lawyer, who helped the family in a land dispute.

The way the lawyer tried the case and did his research became so much the stuff of legend in the family that he resolved he would be like him some day. And he did.

From his hometown of Tuguegarao, Cagayan, where he graduated at the top of his high school class, he moved on to the University of Sto. Tomas, where he got two degrees—a Bachelor of Philosophy (magna cum laude) and Bachelor of Arts (cum laúde).

Philosophy, he says, was the perfect pre-law course and it served him well when he moved on to the law school of the Ateneo de Manila University, where he graduated with second honors and was editor-in-chief of the Ateneo Law Journal.

Lim quickly built a reputation as one of the most sought after legal eagles, handling high profile corporate disputes for the Accra law office, where he became senior partner in 1994 and co-managing partner since 2003.

These cases include the Piatco case, Impsa Senate investigation, attempted hostile take over of the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. by the Gokongwei group, Bank of Nova Scotia case versus the Madrigals, Tomas Aguirre Estate case and the Roberto V. Ongpin ouster case from Belle Corp.

LIM

Propensity for hard work

Lim attributes his success to his propensity for hard work and dogged determination to see things through.

He plans to perform the same feat now that he has committed himself to doing a good job at the helm of the PSE.

"I asked for the 30-day period to really think hard about it because I have always been a lawyer. This was a deviation from what I planned out to do. But after thinking about it, I thought that I would have a fairly good chance at succeeding," Lim says.

Little boy's club

Not a few expressed their concern over Lim's going to the PSE because of the famous quarrels that marred many a board meeting. There were tales of ashtrays flying, brokers swearing and one board member flashing the dirty finger at a fellow board member.

It is also no secret that a number of PSE presidents left with a grudge to bear against the PSE brokers, saying that it was little more than "an old boys' club."

Lim, however, expressed confidence that he would know how to deal with future quarrels, if any, since he is a veteran of courtroom squabbles where he "has seen them all."

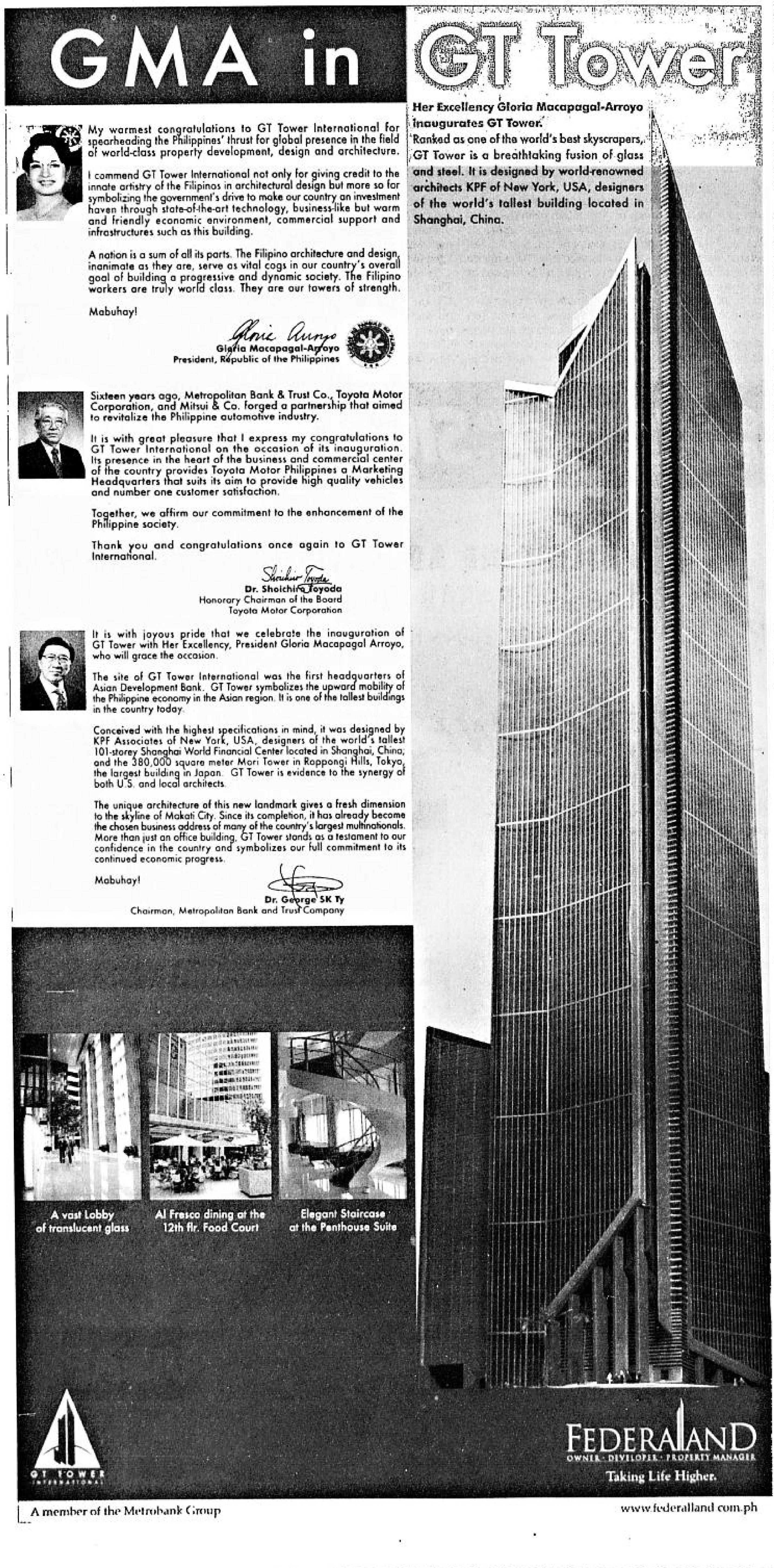
He is also no stranger to the inner workings of the PSE, having been a director of the PSE for two years. He was also chair of the powerful governance committee that metes out penalties to brokers found violating PSE rules.

'Ang pikon, talo'

"My principle has always been *ang pikon, talo*. That is how I maintain my balance. I also pray a lot for patience and perseverance," he says.

He would need a lot of it as he sees himself making a difference at the end of his three-year term.

"I would do my job as I see fit, regardless of who supported or did not support me. My loyalty is to the corporation and to the investing public," he says.



GMA in GT Tower

Her Excellency Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo inaugurates GT Tower.
Ranked as one of the world's best skyscrapers, GT Tower is a breathtaking fusion of glass and steel. It is designed by world-renowned architects KPF of New York, USA, designers of the world's tallest building located in Shanghai, China.

My warmest congratulations to GT Tower International for spearheading the Philippines' thrust for global presence in the field of world-class property development, design and architecture.

I commend GT Tower International not only for giving credit to the innate artistry of the Filipinos in architectural design but more so for symbolizing the government's drive to make our country an investment haven through state-of-the-art technology, business-like but warm and friendly economic environment, commercial support and infrastructures such as this building.

A nation is a sum of all its parts. The Filipino architecture and design, inanimate as they are, serve as vital cogs in our country's overall goal of building a progressive and dynamic society. The Filipino workers are truly world class. They are our towers of strength.

Mabuhay!

Gloria Arroyo
Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo
President, Republic of the Philippines

Sixteen years ago, Metropolitan Bank & Trust Co., Toyota Motor Corporation, and Mitsui & Co. forged a partnership that aimed to revitalize the Philippine automotive industry.

It is with great pleasure that I express my congratulations to GT Tower International on the occasion of its inauguration. Its presence in the heart of the business and commercial center of the country provides Toyota Motor Philippines a Marketing Headquarters that suits its aim to provide high quality vehicles and number one customer satisfaction.

Together, we affirm our commitment to the enhancement of the Philippine society.

Thank you and congratulations once again to GT Tower International.

Shoichiro Toyoda
Dr. Shoichiro Toyoda
Honorary Chairman of the Board
Toyota Motor Corporation

It is with joyous pride that we celebrate the inauguration of GT Tower with Her Excellency, President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, who will grace the occasion.

The site of GT Tower International was the first headquarters of Asian Development Bank. GT Tower symbolizes the upward mobility of the Philippine economy in the Asian region. It is one of the tallest buildings in the country today.

Conceived with the highest specifications in mind, it was designed by KPF Associates of New York, USA, designers of the world's tallest 101-storey Shanghai World Financial Center located in Shanghai, China; and the 380,000 square meter Mori Tower in Roppongi Hills, Tokyo, the largest building in Japan. GT Tower is evidence to the synergy of both U.S. and local architects.

The unique architecture of this new landmark gives a fresh dimension to the skyline of Makati City. Since its completion, it has already become the chosen business address of many of the country's largest multinationals. More than just an office building, GT Tower stands as a testament to our confidence in the country and symbolizes our full commitment to its continued economic progress.

Mabuhay!

Dr. George SK Ty
Chairman, Metropolitan Bank and Trust Company

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Telephone etiquette

GOODNESS GRACES

Lia S. Bernardo

IN CONCLUDING the call:

20. End the conversation with agreement on what is to happen next; if you are to follow-up, do so immediately.

21. Thank the caller for calling; invite the caller to call again.

In transferring calls:

22. Transfer ONLY when necessary; get the information yourself.

23. If you must transfer, avoid the use of the word "transfer." Say instead: "I am going to connect you with."

24. Explain why you are "transferring" the call.

25. Give the caller the person's name and direct number

26. Stay on the line and introduce the caller.

In taking messages:

27. Identify yourself and for whom you are answering the phone.

28. Practice political sensitivity.

29. Indicate the period of time the person will be available.

30. Write down all the important information given:

a. The name of the caller. Ask for spelling if unclear.

b. The (correct) telephone number of the caller.

c. The message. Ask for clarification if necessary.

31. Read back what you've written to be sure you've understood the message correctly.

32. Always assure the person that you will deliver the message promptly.

33. Deliver the message in a timely fashion.

Never:

34. Eat, drink or chew gum while on the phone.

35. Leave an open line:

a. Place the caller on hold

b. Check back with the caller frequently: every 30-45 seconds.

Always:

36. Put a smile in your telephone voice and let your personality shine!

Please email your business etiquette queries to etiquetteconsultants@hotmail.com names of senders will not be published.

'Nature' entrepreneurs ...

From page B2-7

buyer. I agreed to waive our 'payment-before-shipment' terms. That was two years ago. It's not that he didn't pay—he paid on installment."

Pinpin: "He still has a few thousand dollars to settle with us." (laughs)

Rene: "It taught me a lesson: I should not handle the financial aspects of the business. And I should listen to Pinpin more often." (laughs)

Both, however, are capable of bending over backwards when dealing with their employees. Pinpin sources out workers from her home province and gives them lodging.

Burnout

Pinpin, the founder and still the moving spirit of the business wants to call a meeting of the board of directors to talk about succession and professionalizing the business.

"How can the company grow when we do everything ourselves?" Pinpin cries. She recalls, at this point, the promise of their partners' wives to join the operations that never materialized. She had not counted, when they began, that she would handle financial management on top of designing.

This is why she is open to a joint venture. An alliance with a foreign company, she expects, would professionalize the business.

For his part, Rene is upbeat about venturing into another business. He does not dismiss the possibility of diversifying into furniture making. After all, their workplace in Talisay has plenty of room for expansion.

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Of plants and painters

ALL4ART

Bea Zobel Jr.

WHILE traveling in Batanes, I came across some plants I had never seen before. There was this lovely tree which looked a little like a cypress. There was pandan with pretty fruits, as well as a local variety of dates. Many of the plants in Batanes are found nowhere else.

Due to the province's unique botanical array and because of its rich cultural resources, Education Secretary Butch Abad and his wife, Rep. Dina Abad, are now working hard to get Batanes included in the Unesco World Heritage List. Wouldn't that be great?

Remarkable species

The fact that Unesco is so concerned with our botanical diversity further highlights the importance of our remarkable plant resources. There are many species in the country that cause great excitement among plant lovers and scientists.

An example of this is the *waling-waling* (Vanda sanderiana). A friend of mine explains to me that the *waling-waling* is an important breeding stock for many of the orchids of the world. Unfortunately, because its natural habitat in Mindanao is fast disappearing, it is actually facing extinction. (As a side note, the *waling-waling* is so famous, that unlike other Filipino words, it is actually recognized by the spell check of many computers!)

The importance and beauty of Philippine flora have always been celebrated by scholars. One such scholar was Fr. Manuel Blanco. According to Fr. Pedro Gallende's article on this priest-scholar, Blanco was born on November 24, 1779 in the Spanish province of Zamora, and came to the archipelago as an Augustinian priest in 1805.

His fascination for our plants became a lifelong scientific devotion. He was assigned to such towns as Angat in Bulacan, as well as Batangas, Bauan and San Jose in Batangas. He also stayed in Parañaque. His last assignment was the monastery in Guadalupe (Yes, in what is presently the infamous traffic bottleneck on Edsa!). He died in 1845.

Some books characterize the Spanish friars as ruthless and uncaring. In contrast, Blanco is said to have been, "a man meticulous in the performance of his duties... He was a model priest, teacher and healer of sorts..."

He did much of his research in the forests of Bulacan and Batangas. He also established botanical study gardens in Intramuros. Aside from researching on plants, Blanco was also attending to the needs of his parish. He is credited with the building of San Jose Church in Batangas, which still stands and is one of the most beautiful in the province today.

Gallende notes that the first edition of Blanco's book ("Flora de Filipinas") was published in 1837. Other editions came out in 1845 and in 1883. A recent edition was brought out by Fr. Gallende in 1993.

Pocket parks

I hear that Fr. Blanco's garden on the grounds of San Agustin Church has been revived. Don't you wish that more gardens were established in other towns to honor this man, who was so dedicated to our country?

These pocket parks could be tourist attractions in Bauan, San Jose, Parañaque, etc., and filled with the kind of plants that the good friar studied. Such parks would not just be sanctuaries from the pressures of contemporary life, but could also be venues for scientific studies, with small exhibits and maybe even learning kiosks where young people can review ecological issues while becoming reacquainted with the joys of our plant world.

I hope that such gardens will be more free-flowing and not be so stiff and manicured. There is a tendency to cram our public spaces with cement walks, cement posts, cement pavilions and cement benches. In the end, there is more concrete than plants or even soil.

In contrast, traditional Filipino gardens were usually very casual, comfortable affairs, with fruit trees, patches of bare soil, no lawns, easy-to-care-for but colorful plants like *gumamelas* and *santan*.

An example of a wonderful old-fashioned garden is that of the 19th-century Villavicencio house in Taal, Batangas, now managed by my friend Baby Quiblat and her family. It even has a winding path made of a kind of maroon gravel. There are no new-fangled plants. I think it is precisely when gardens are allowed to just be—to breathe, to unravel and sway with the wind, instead of being confined in cement and constantly trimmed—that they become such centers of the spirit.

One of the things that Fr. Blanco's book was famous for was its lavish illustrations. These beautiful plates of local plants were actually made by many well-known Philippine painters from that period. Eventually, the individually-illustrated pages became collectors' items. Many well-appointed homes would have the elegantly framed plates decorating their walls.

These paintings or plates of flora are sometimes referred to as botanicals. What is their attraction? Of course, a flower is always lovely to look at. Yet there is more to our attraction to plants. I think part of the explanation has to do with the sheer beauty of plant forms.

Exquisite proportion

My friend Ino Manalo went to great lengths to make me understand that. Aside from the colors and the patterns of plants, there is also the indescribably satisfying sense of proportion. There is something so exquisitely just right about the relative sizes of the petals of a rose. Everything seems so random and yet so exact.

Actually, Ino says this intrinsic beauty of things is discussed in books like the "Da Vinci Code" as the Fibonacci sequence. This is a ratio between the different parts of a plant or animal. The Fibonacci concept helps explain

OF PLANTS/ C2

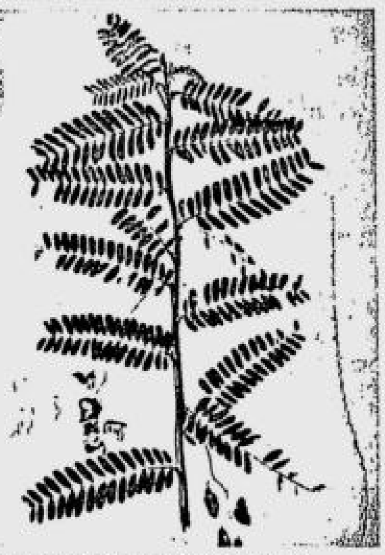


ILLUSTRATION from "Flora de Filipinas"

The importance and beauty of Philippine flora have always been celebrated by scholars and artists

SO WHAT COKE ARE YOU, REALLY?

Did you know that it's easy to tell someone's character by the things he or she likes? Take the quiz below and be surprised how much your taste tells a lot about who you are and, most of all, what Coke will best refresh you.

What would you wear on a big date?
A. A classy, all-black ensemble from top to toe
B. Whatever's loose and comfortable
C. Preppy silhouette that's dominantly neutrals
D. Body-hugging that will show your assets

Who are the artists on your CD rack?
A. Maroon 5, Alicia Keys
B. Hoobastank, Incubus
C. Dashboard Confessional
D. Ministry of Sound, Ibiza

What do you read?
A. Newspaper and novels
B. Independent titles
C. Comics and sci-fi
D. Magazines and self-help books

How do you like your steak?
A. Well-done
B. Rare
C. Medium-rare
D. I don't eat steak

What is your dream cell phone?
A. The less complicated, the better
B. Something that no one else has
C. With lots of games and software to operate
D. Streamlined, with lots of stylish covers

What's you dream car?
A. Anything that has four wheels and drive
B. SUV
C. Beetle
D. Porsche

How will you pose in your yearbook photo?
A. Something that mommy would hang on the wall
B. Wacky and crazy, with tongue sticking out
C. You really don't care
D. Glamorous, almost like a magazine photo shoot

Now, the fun part. Below is an assessment of your personality profile. Find out which one you are based on your answers above. As a bonus, we've also written down which Coca-Cola best describes and suits you. After all, there's nothing like grabbing a Coke that'll refresh you the way you want it to.

Mostly A's
You're a classic. Everyone finds it easy to talk to you, and you get along well with almost everybody. You find it easy to get new friends, even in the most unlikely places.

So to speak, you're like the Regular Coke. The one that everyone has always loved.

Mostly B's
You're on the wild side. You like to explore new places, and you love the outdoors. You find satisfaction in experimenting, and is happy knowing that there's always something different to do.

If you were a Coke, you'd be Cherry Coke. There's always a cherry wild side in you!

Mostly C's
You've got a lot going for you coz you've got it just right. You always see the fun side of things. Easy-going and humorous, surely no party will be the same without you.

You're definitely a Vanilla Coke—you have just the right touch of vanilla.

Mostly D's
You're ultra sophisticated. You always strive to improve yourself. You go to the gym, eat healthy food, because you know they're good for you. You're a New Age phenomenon!

Coke Light best suits you. It's the same Coke but with less than 1 calorie, it's good for you.

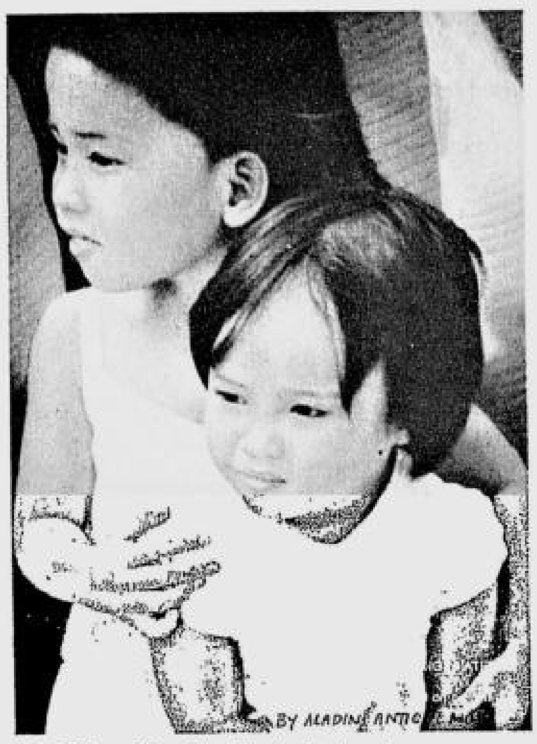
Regulahhh
No sugahhh
Cherry wildahhh
Vanillahhh
Vanilla Coke
WITH VANILLA FLAVOR
NATURAL FLAVORS
330 mL
cherry Coke
SUGAR FREE
Coca-Cola light
Coca-Cola

"Coca-Cola", "Coca-Cola light", "Cherry Coke", "Vanilla Coke", and the Dynamic Ribbon device are trademarks of The Coca-Cola Company © 2004 The Coca-Cola Company

Twin bill of sensitive art

By Araceli Limcaco-Dans
Contributor

TWO sensitive and highly talented artists, Aladin Antiqueño and Azor Pazcoguin, will launch a joint art exhibit on Sept. 24, 6:30 p.m., at the Renaissance Art Gallery, 4/L, Building A, SM Megamall in Edsa, Mandaluyong City. Honored guests will be Cecilia Bulaong Garrucho, Alden Castañeda and Alwin S. Sta. Rosa.



"SA Piling ni Ate," by Aladin Antiqueño

Antiqueño's paintings exude the simplicity, innocence, curiosity and playfulness of children. Watching the children at play after their school hours in his hometown in. Bacoor, Cavite reminds him of his own childhood, when he was painfully shy, deeply sensitive and elusive.

Antiqueño is the youngest of seven children. A Bachelor of Fine Arts graduate from the Philippine Women's University Institute of Fine Arts and Design, he has won over 10 awards in local art competitions, including First Prize in the Shell National Competition for Students. He held his first solo exhibit at the British Council in 2000.

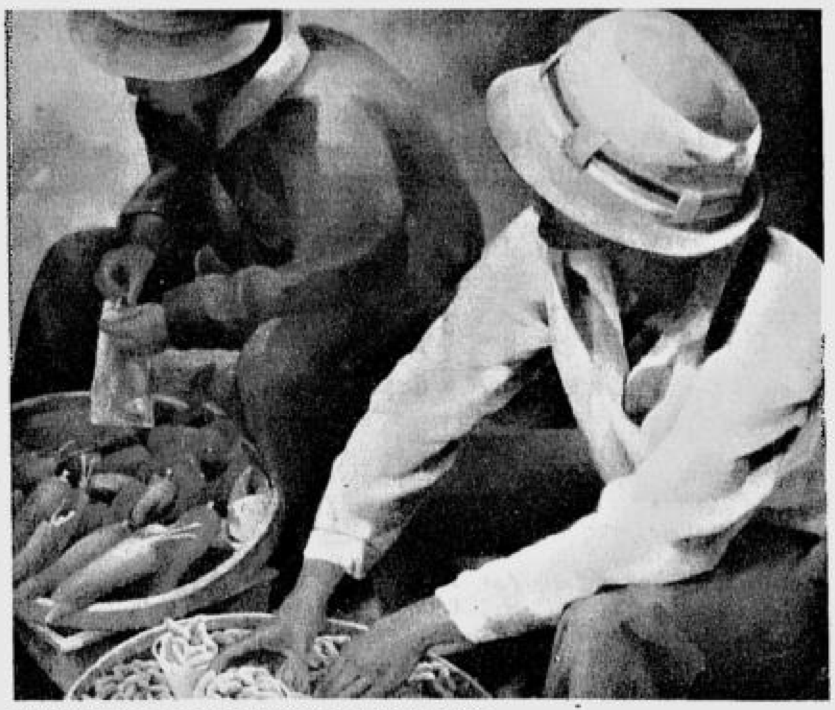
As a child, he viewed the role of men as the protector of women. But as Antiqueño grew older, he became less idealistic. Today, in his frustration, he paints what he feels the world should be.

In his painting, "Salabay," he depicts the abstract feelings of agitation and fright of a young boy carried piggyback by his reassuring and protective sister. In this realistic painting, Antiqueño shows two contrasting expressions and the abstract qualities of shielding a helpless victim with courage and love.

Antiqueño's paintings of children are extraordinary. The skin tones, the backyard setting of banana leaves, the Philippine sunlight, the extraordinary composition are elements that are not to be overlooked. In orchestrating his sensitive renditions, he sublimates one's senses into the noble basics: virtues of protectiveness, sharing and love.

Aladin Antiqueno and Azor Pazcoguin continue their explorations of everyday humanity in their forthcoming joint exhibit at Renaissance Art Gallery

These are abstract qualities that, for a realistic painter to ably express, is quite a feat. In the same light, the viewer can easily identify with the meaningful moments expressed by Antiqueño's paintings as indeed, very Filipino.



"KAPATID sa Hanapbuhay," by Azor Pazcoguin

Sacred process

When he first started out, Pazcoguin thought of the simplest subject to paint—fruits. He painted fruits that were in season, such as guavas, oranges, star apples and mangoes, painting each in oil on small canvases.

As he painted, the physical therapist-turned-painter would analyze the mixture of colors, the color tones, the texture of an orange rind in contrast with its edible contents. Then, he would mentally visualize his own sense of taste to "see" with the mind's eye whether the orange was sweet or sour.

As Pazcoguin continued to paint the orange, he would also project his sense of touch, smell and taste. This enabled him to synchronize the paint brush he held, mixing it with the oil pigments before him and transferring the colors to the canvas. The metamorphosis of an idea, the orchestration of one's senses, the projection of an artist's emotions onto the canvas and his handling of pigments—the creative process—are sacred moments for this artist.

When Pazcoguin gained a certain amount of self-confidence, he advanced to painting landscapes with pastoral scenes with cows, chickens and domestic animals. He moved on, finally, to painting human figures, more aware now of anatomical proportion, perspective and scaling. He also learned to express the illusion of advancing and receding colors, until he discovered the reflection of our brilliant Philippine sun.

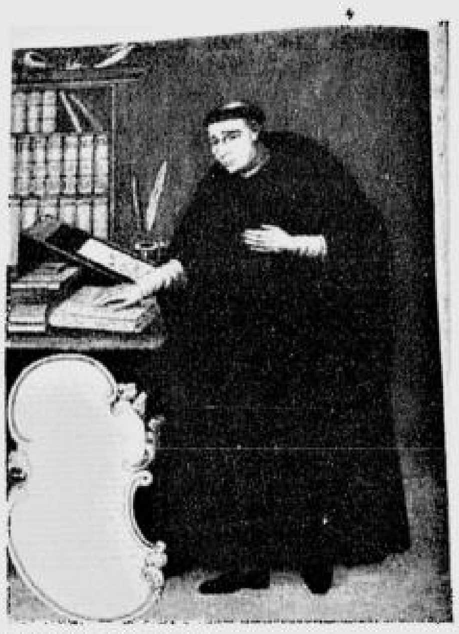
Pazcoguin has joined over 10 group exhibits in the last five years, including one in New York. He paints eight to 14 hours daily.

He feels there is still so much to learn in the field of the visual arts. At present, he is focused on painting the *masa* performing manual labor, such as men carrying heavy loads on their backs and women vendors selling wares along sidewalks.

He feels the energy and sweat of the laboring class, is deeply appreciative of the dignity of labor and laments the great disparity in the distribution of wealth. Portraying the pulse and spirit of a nation at hard labor, he hopes that future generations will appreciate and treasure what these men represent.

For the past four years, Antiqueño and Pazcoguin have actively participated in art workshops with their group of artists comprising Araceli Limcaco Dans, Angelo Baldemor, Joven Ignacio, Felipe Mayoya, Tito Sanchez and Janice Young.

The exhibit will run until Oct. 4 and will benefit the Philippine General Hospital Ward for Adults. Call Renaissance Gallery at 6373101.



FR. MANUEL Blanco

Of plants and painters

From page C1

why it is so pleasant to contemplate the different compartments of a chambered nautilus. There is a rhythm to the way the compartments increase in size.

Presumably, each time we admire a botanical print on the wall, we are really mesmerized by the beauty of the perfect proportions of a plant, leaf, fruit or flower—which in turn are the reflections of the order of the universe.

One can also say that a flower painting introduces a bright, refreshing spot in even the most dreary room. In a way, people who toil to nurture little gardens in the squalor of our cities are like soldiers battling against ugliness. Hooray to all those women and men throughout the country who, even as I write this, are planting little beds in dry, abandoned lots or caring for flowers in a rusty can!

One such artist who has quite admirably carried out the tradition of botanical illustration is Dindon Cordova. Dindon is a native of Pasay. Having first tried his hand at advertising, he finally found his calling in botanicals.

His many paintings are painstakingly drawn—delicate, yet full of the energy of creation. He has done many works for our family. He even created lovely murals for my parents' home in Mindoro. To achieve a high degree of accuracy, Dindon will patiently wait for a plant to be in season or to bear fruit, so that he can render its beauty in detail.

When you ask him why he has chosen his field of art, he sometimes points out that he is helping preserve our botanical heritage. Many of the plants he is painting are approaching extinction.

I suppose, in this way, Dindon is very much following in the footsteps of that great botanist and hero, Fr. Blanco, who has so selflessly documented our country's plant treasures.

For questions and comments, e-mail beartist@filipinaslibrary.org.ph or address letter to Filipinas Heritage Library, Makati Ave., Ayala Triangle, Makati City

Puno sa pera.

Pera ang bunga sa recycling! Kaya't ipagbili sa amin ang inyong mga lumang newspaper at tabloid. Makiisa sa pagligtas ng mga puno sa kagubatan. Nakatulong ka na, kikita ka pa!

For pick-ups:
Linis-Ganda will pick-up old newspapers and tabloids *FREE* within Metro Manila. For pick-up schedules, call Weng or Leo at 430-6274 or 428-0924. Pick-ups are from June 5 to October 5, 2004.

For walk-in sellers, please drop off your newspapers at the following Inquirer offices:
MANILA: FEP Printing Press loading dock 3817 Mascardo St. along Chino Roces Avenue Makati City • Tel No 896-4286 Contact person John Estanislao or Roger Llanes
LAGUNA: FEP Printing Press, Printown, Mamplasan, Biñan, Laguna • Tel No 897-4386 Loc 2158 Contact person. Rene Chavez
CEBU: FEP Printing Press, Warehouse #1, Menzi Compound National Highway Pajo, Lapu-Lapu City • Tel no (032) 340-7970 to 71 Contact person: Lenny Brua
DAVAO: FEP Printing Press loading dock, Barangay Ma-A, Ma-A Road, Davao City • Tel. no. (082) 244-1711 to 12. Contact person Rowena Balandra

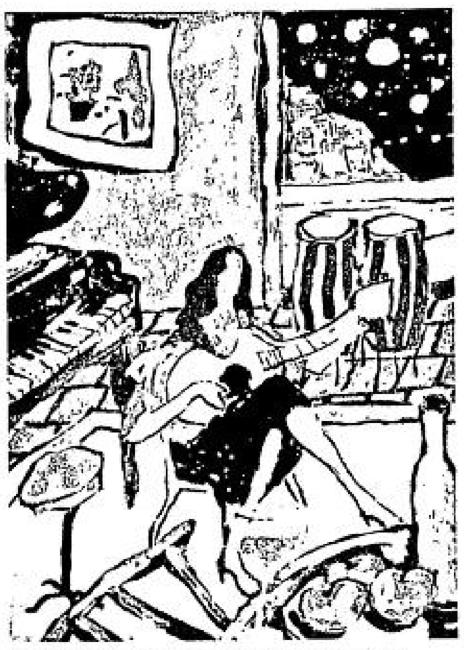
FEP will receive newspapers on weekdays from 9am to 4pm in Makati, 9:30am to 4pm in Cebu and Davao, and on Tuesdays and Thursdays 1pm to 5pm in Laguna. Sellers will be paid P5.00/kilo in Manila and Laguna, and P3.50 in Cebu and Davao.

LINIS-GANDA

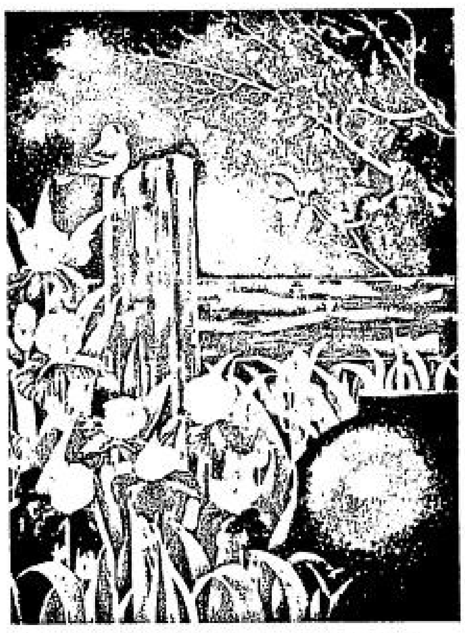
NEWSPAPER DRIVE
BECAUSE OLD NEWS IS GOOD NEWS

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
News that makes a difference in the environment

Cukingnam at RCBC Plaza, Rocha at Nicotina Pavilion



"MEXICAN Serenade," by Carlos Rocha



"EARLY Spring Morning," by Addie Sycip Cukingnam

VISUAL ARTS

ADDIE Sycip Cukingnam is holding a solo exhibit, "Alay ni Addie sa Alay Kapwa," tomorrow at the lobby of Carlos P. Romulo Auditorium at RCBC Plaza, Makati. Cukingnam will donate all the proceeds of her exhibit to Alay Kapwa Kristiyaning Komunidad and Millennium Foundation. Call 8857811/ 8451199.

CARLOS Rocha mounts his exhibit "Life and Color" on Oct. 3-31 at Nicotina Garden Pavilion, Roxas Blvd., Pasay City. The show features paintings and sculptures. Call 5517906 to 07.

DANTE Castillo captures folksy Filipino scenes and still life with a contrast of light and shadow in "Pure Light." The exhibit is ongoing until Sept. 22 at Gallery 139, 3/L, Glorietta 4, Ayala Center, Makati.

HIRAYA Gallery mounts Fil Delacruz's "Outcries" until Oct. 5 at 530 UN Ave., Ermita, Manila. The idyllic beauty which circles the lives of ethnic tribes is caught with nostalgia and angst in the mezzotints of Delacruz, who visited the Manobos of Kalamansig, Sultan Kudarat, for three years.

THE DRAWING Room presents "Lush" on Sept. 25-Oct. 19 at the G/F, Metrostar Building, 1007 Metropolitan Ave., Makati. The exhibit features the new works of Noel Cuizon, Kiko Escora, Alfred Esquillo, Karen Flores, Tita Lim and Clairelynn Uy. Their creations consist of oil on canvas, paper, plastic and objects. Call 8977877/ 8976990.

PETE Jimenez, advertising executive-slash-sculptor, presents "Wired," his sixth one-man show at the West Gallery in SM Megamall. The show runs until Oct. 5. West Gallery is at the Art Walk, 4/L, SM Megamall A, Mandaluyong City. Call 6341284.

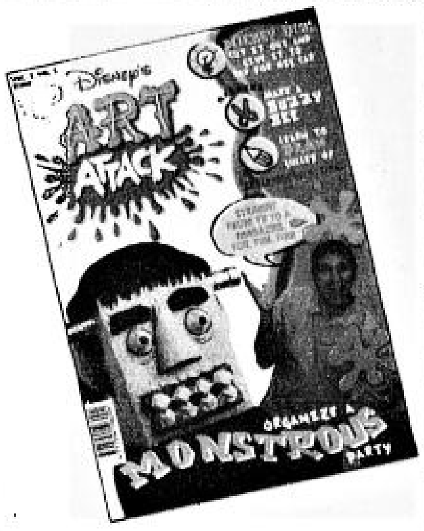
GALERIA de las Islas mounts "Buhay Pinoy sa Kahoy" by Frank Gajo and Fred Lava, until Sept. 28 at the 3/F, Silahis Center, 744 Gen. Luna St., Intramuros, Manila. The exhibit features the artists' recent works using Philippine hardwood in rendering Philippine scenes, genre figures and religious icons.

THE CULTURAL Center of the Philippines' Main Gallery features the most outstanding works of Pacita Abad until Oct. 31. The exhibit "Circles in My Mind" showcases the techniques of lithography, relief printing, screen-printing and hand-colored paper pulp.

THE MUSEUM of De La Salle University-Manila mounts "Moving Art" until Dec. 10. The exhibit is a showcase of artwork rendered in the expressionist tradition. It features the works of Botong Francisco, Bencab, Fernando Modesto, Solomon Saprid, Cesar Legaspi, Fernando Zobel, Roberto Chabet, Lao Lian Ben, Jose Joya, Anita Magsaysay-Ho, Hernando Ocampo and Manuel Rodriguez. Call 5244611.

VICTOR Michael Bella introduces his glow-in-the-dark art through a display at Costas Antiquas Gallery, located at the 3/F, Art Space, Glorietta 4. The artwork is dubbed "King Neptune's Bubbles," which features sea creatures encapsulated in bubbles.

SOME 200 Europeans and friends of Europe in the Philippines turned to art in celebration of Europe Day. The head of the delegation of the European Commission to the Philippines, Ambassador Jan de Kok was joined by European ambassadors and consuls and Pia Rivera, a Filipino artist who studied Independent Study in Art from the Instituto d'Arte Lorenzo de' Medici in Florence, Italy, in putting their hand imprints using acrylic in varying colors to make up an artwork dubbed "United in Diversity—EU Enlargement—2004."



Art demo for kids

NATIONAL Book Store launches a new craft magazine called Disney's Art Attack, a take-off from the popular Disney Channel show with the same name.

For the mag's launch, parents with children who love arts and crafts are invited to a demonstration of fun craft activities for kids, where they can learn new and exciting ideas to stimulate their creativity.

The craft demonstrations will be held 3-5 p.m. on Sept. 25 in NBS-Glorietta, Oct. 3 in the Edsa Shangri-La Plaza branch and Oct. 9 in the Quezon Avenue branch.

Meanwhile, NBS also introduces Chinese thank-you cards by Hallmark called "Oriental Expressions."

Express yourself with the simplicity and elegance of the east, specifically through these cards that bear delicate designs such as gold Chinese characters embossed on a red cover. Inside are heartwarming messages meant to convey your gratitude for the recipient's thoughtfulness.

Available in all NBS outlets nationwide.

谢 谢
THANK YOU

THE PILL & WEIGHT GAIN

What's the Truth?

Many women continue to believe that hormonal contraceptives cause weight gain. However, latest evidence (Galo, et al. 2004) has confirmed that **there is no association between the use of low dose combined oral contraceptives and weight gain.**

Sadly, **weight gain is a trend as we age**. The rate at which the body burns up calories decreases at approximately 2 % per decade after 18 years of age. At the same time, many women also tend to become less active as they get older, and eat more.

However, the critical issue is whether the Pill increases the natural age-related weight gain that many women will experience. Recent clinical studies show that there is no association between weight change and low dose hormonal contraceptive use. Weight gain has been observed in the past with older pills containing high levels of Ethinylestradiol (EE), but is clearly not apparent with low dose pills like the combined oral pills containing 20mcg Ethinylestradiol (EE) + 150mcg Desogestrel (DSG).

In fact, studies examining weight gain in women using the 20mcgEE + 150mcg DSG (Serfaty, et al. 1998; Lavin, et al. 2002) showed a negligible effect on body weight. Researchers have therefore suggested that if weight change does occur during any hormonal contraceptive use - whether gain or loss - **factors such as exercise, eating patterns and lifestyle changes should be examined. They are more likely to be the cause.**

In addition, a true minority of women may be particularly sensitive to estrogen's fluid retention effect, and may therefore experience water retention during hormonal contraceptive use. These women should be advised to take a hormonal contraceptive containing the lowest possible dose of estrogen like the 20mcgEE + 150mcg DSG or an estrogen-free contraceptive pill containing 75mcg Desogestrel. These products can be bought in leading drugstores nationwide with a prescription and doctor's advice should be sought.

For questions, please consult
your doctor or email:
mercilon@organon.ph
Or text to 0917-8523350
Or send your letters to:
ORGANON PHILIPPINES, INC.
5th Floor Feliza Bldg.,
#108 V.A. Rufino St.
Legaspi Village, Makati City (1260)

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IF SOMEONE YOU ARE CARING FOR HAS SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS, BUILD THEIR STRENGTH WITH **NUTREN**.

When you're looking after a loved one's particular needs, you become aware of how things can suddenly change.

Now, their current medical condition prevents them from being as active as they once were.

Bring back the spark and energy into their lives with a better way of caring. One that can make them feel stronger everyday.

Nutren is a delicious meal replacement product and supplement in powder form – a breakthrough from the Nestlé Research Center in Switzerland. Known and prescribed by doctors, Nutren provides support for medical conditions where the role of nutrition is vital. In itself, Nutren is more than a complete meal since it contains whey plus all of the essential nutrients, vitamins and minerals in **every** glass.

In fact, Nutren contains at least 3 times more whey protein than any other commercially-prepared food product or homemade alternative. Whey protein has been clinically proven to:

- help maintain muscle mass throughout aging and repair body tissues[1]
- help boost the immune system by raising levels of glutathione (an **antioxidant**), thereby helping reduce the risk of infection[2]

	WHEY
Nutren Meal Replacement	HIGH
Milk supplements	LOW
Table food	NONE

With Nutren, you can give the best and complete care possible, making everyday a special one to look forward to.

FEEL STRONGER EVERYDAY

Available at all leading drugstores nationwide.

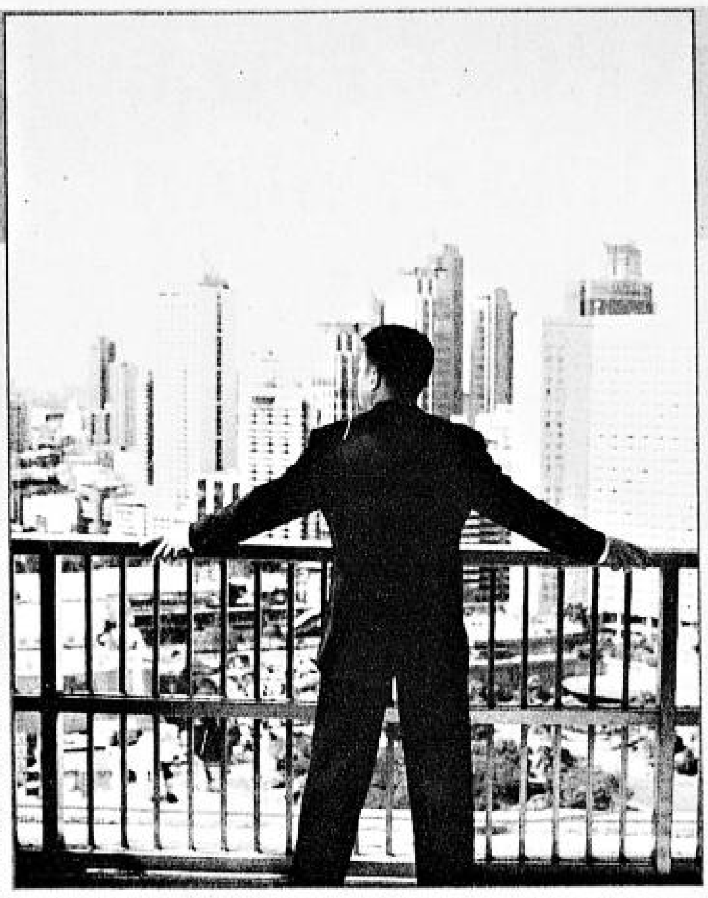
Nestlé Nutrition
Nutren Solutions
SPECIALIZED NUTRITION

[1] Walzem, R.L., C.J. Dillard, and J.B. German. Crit. Rev. Food & Sci & Nutr. 42(353), 2002. [2] [illegible] Cancer Res 1994;54(5):1969-1975

[illegible]

Hard Work Finds the Easy Life

They work in Makati, the hub of Metro Manila. They work hard there, building their career, making the money they want and more importantly a name they can bank on. So why do they get in their cars, cabs, jeepneys, FX vans , buses, or the MRT and brave the hours of traffic home, when they can make their home in Makati as well?



Enter The Columns, Ayala Avenue. There are a lot of other condos out there boasting of features and amenities, but none of them have what The Columns has: the invaluable convenience and cachet of a special location, an Ayala Avenue address.

The Columns is designed for what its developer, an Ayala company, Community Innovations, Inc., calls the young urban achievers, who have their urban lifestyle in common. The Columns is designed to be a cornerstone of that lifestyle.

People who live in The Columns will never have to endure a long commute to work. If the traffic gets too bad, they can just walk. All of Ayala Avenue is down their street.

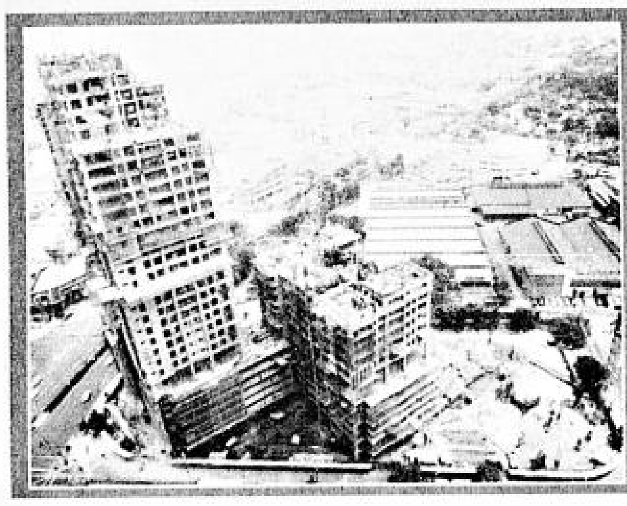
The convenience is a dream come true. A pair of young college grads work late hours at a call center in one of the skyscrapers on Ayala Avenue. Commutes to and from work can be risky at the hours they keep. If they pooled their resources and bought a studio unit at The Columns-easily affordable especially with CII's co-ownership pricing plan-they not only could make it home safely at three in the morning, they could sleep in until the last minute. The same goes for the office professional who thrives on coming to work early and staying late, and for the executive who likes the feel of living where the action is. The luxury of proximity belongs to those whose home is minutes away from work: the luxury of residents at The Columns, Ayala Avenue.

None of this urban convenience means giving up the comforts of home. For the past year since its launch, The Columns has been rightfully proud of its resort-like amenities: its seventh-floor Recreation Club, the resort in the sky, with its swimming pools and fitness center and jogging path, its sunny patio and children's playground, its barbecue pits and meeting places. It will make a new statement in casual dining in its Ground Floor, where famous coffeehouses will set up shop: the perfect place to hang out amid tree-shaded plazas and greenery. Every unit, from a studio to a two-bedroom home, offers copious natural light and air, privacy and comfort, and all those excellent amenities.

Plus, it's a good investment, managed by the outstanding professionalism of Ayala Property Management Corporation-the folks who keep the Ayala malls pristine and the luxury apartments and villages in the peak of comfort. And it is backed by the country's most respected real estate developer, Ayala Land.

Working hard is the surest way to success. Living in the city doesn't have to be as hard. It's easy at The Columns, Ayala Avenue.

For inquiries, you may call 750-0471 or 750-0484 or email cii-sales@ayalaland.com.ph or visit www.thecolumns.com.ph. Model units are available for viewing at the 3rd Floor Glorietta 3, Ayala Center.



Tower 1 Reaches Its Height

The Columns, Ayala Avenue tops the 30th floor of Tower One and the 14th floor of Tower 2 in this aerial view of the three-tower project, with the foundation of Tower 3 already completed.

The progress of construction at the central Makati location reflects the success of unit sales. According to its developer, Ayala company Community Innovations, Inc., The Columns has achieved 80 percent unit sales, with a majority of two-bedroom units sold. The company expects complete sellout by early 2005.

The Columns is a construction project of the Makati Development Corp, an Ayala Land company renowned for its ISO-certified safety, health and environmental standards.

For inquiries, you may call 750-0471 or 750-0484 or email cii-sales@ayalaland.com.ph or visit www.thecolumns.com.ph. Model units are available for viewing at the 3rd Floor Glorietta 3, Ayala Center.

Have E

WHAT'S within five minutes of The Columns, Ayala Avenue? Everything the ciy has to offer, that's what.

The Columns, the hip hi-rise condo complex from an Ayala company, Community Innovations, Inc., is planted right on the cusp of the dynamic business and entertainment hubs of Makati City. After all, with an Ayala Avenue address-your address, should you choose to live there-what else should you expect?

A total of 175 office buildings are within five minutes from The Columns, Ayala Avenue. That's 175 single structures housing hundreds of businesses, offices, and companies. Banks, travel agencies, media, investing, and the local headquarters of multinational conglomerates, are practically just outside The Columns' doorstep. That could be your doorstep.

Almost all the ones in Makati are within minutes from The Columns. That means those hassling commutes can be reduced to a nice walk. If you know how Makati traffic goes, you know the convenience of walking to and from work is practically priceless.

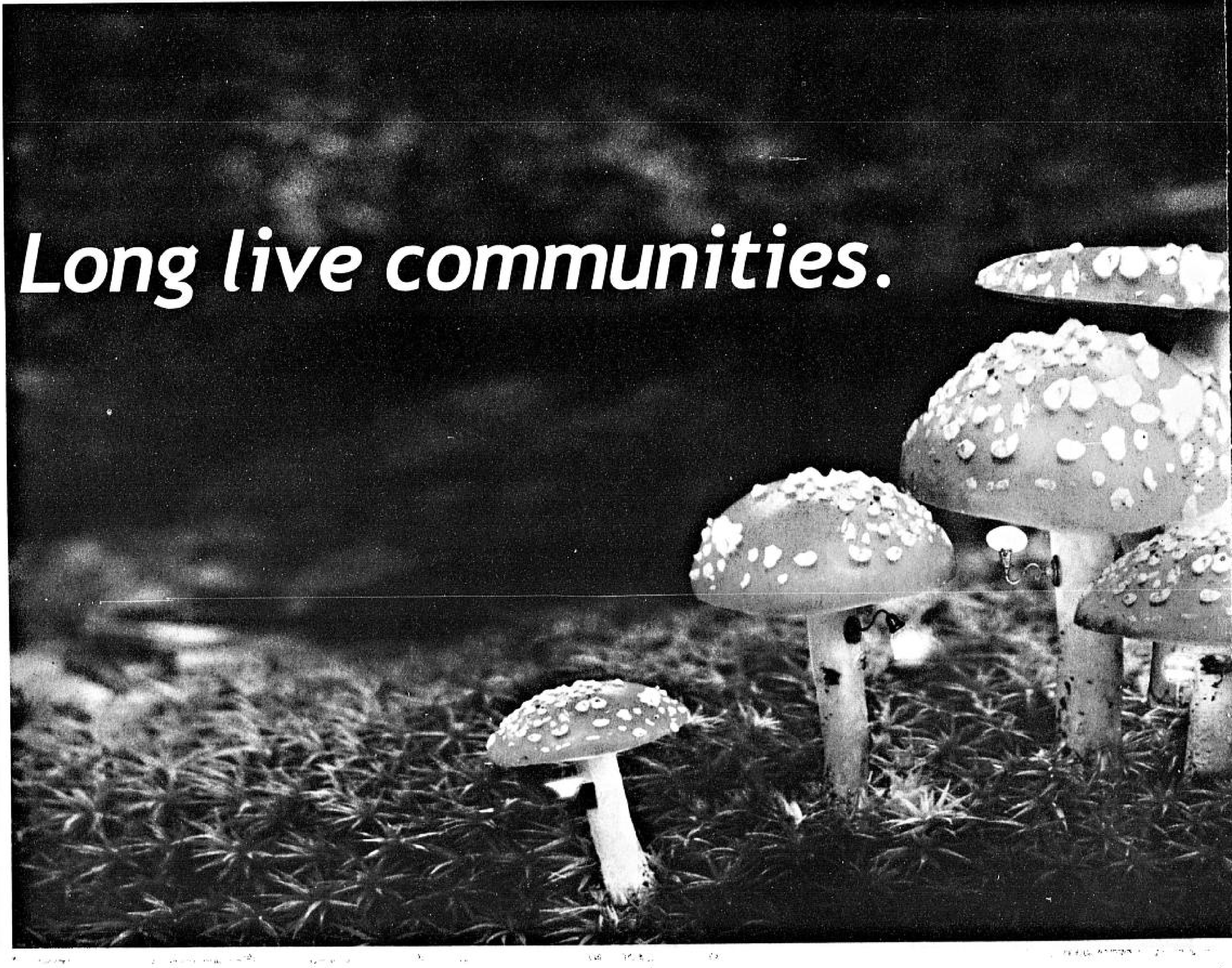
Dozens of international embassies are in the neighborhood, for everyone looking to travel for fun or enterprise. As for services, they're all there, from the most important-Makati Medical Center, one of the best hospitals in the country, is right across the intersection from The Columns-to the most recreational: golf centers, spas, fitness centers, driving ranges and more. Not to mention

The Columns, Ayala Av

THE COLUMNS, Ayala Avenue, the hi-rise Makati condominium from an Ayala company, Community Innovations Inc., now offers an exciting new option to its flexible payment schemes: co-ownership.

With co-ownership, two or more interested parties can band together to shoulder the investment in a studio, one-bedroom, or two-bedroom unit at The Columns. Under this option, buyers can obtain a studio at the chic residential development for as low as Php 11,000/month!

Along with co-ownership, The Columns also offers flexible


Long live communities.

For inquiries, call 750-0484, 750-0471 and 849-0551; e-mail cii-sales@ayalaland.com.ph; or visit www.co

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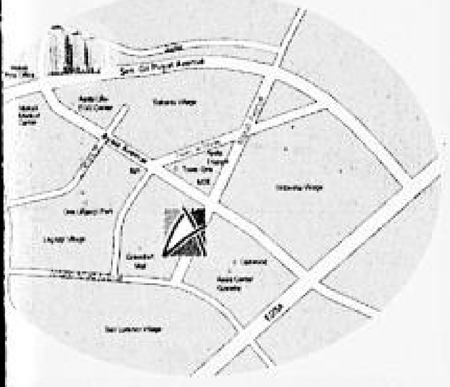
verything in 5 Minutes

ls such as the Ateneo Law School & School of Busi- De La Salle Graduate School of Business, Don Bosco emy, and churches like St. Andrew, Shrine of the Sa- Heart and Greenbelt Chapel, all within walking dis- from The Columns.

hat about fun? Jupiter Street, with its restaurants, clubs, and high-end art and design showrooms, is a drive behind The Columns. Head down Ayala Av- and hang a right on Makati Avenue, and there's Ay- enter, from the multitude of shopping experiences of etta to the massive block of The Landmark to the d-winning garden oasis of Greenbelt-with the best nas in town and a thriving new center for nightlife its bars, restaurants, and clubs. Hang a left, and con- on to the neon streets and hotspots along Kalayaan ts environs.

ith all these at your feet-again, literally at your feet: an walk to almost anywhere in Legazpi and Salcedo es from The Columns, if you wanted to-you might ant to stay at home. But you should. And not just for rightly lit rooms and corridors, so revolutionary ared to your stereotypical city condo.

re's why: a seventh-floor open-air Recreation Club the equivalent of a club membership, with an inte- d suite of amenities the completeness of which can't und in any other comparable residential develop- in Makati. A fitness center for those days when you just don't want to get out to work out. A game room with a mini-theatre system. Of course swimming pools for grownups and kids. Speaking of things for the kids, how about a daycare center and safety-conscious playground? Add a jogging path and it's an all-in-one getaway seven storeys above the city traffic and an elevator ride from your front door.



The Columns will also create a new epicenter for hanging out and coming together. Its Ground Floor is designed to house al-fresco dining and cafés. You can expect the usual suspects to be the coffeehouses at the feet of The Columns' three towers. Plus a mini-grocer for residents who need to grab a quick item or two, a laundry service-all surrounded by friendly tree-shaded plazas and gardens.

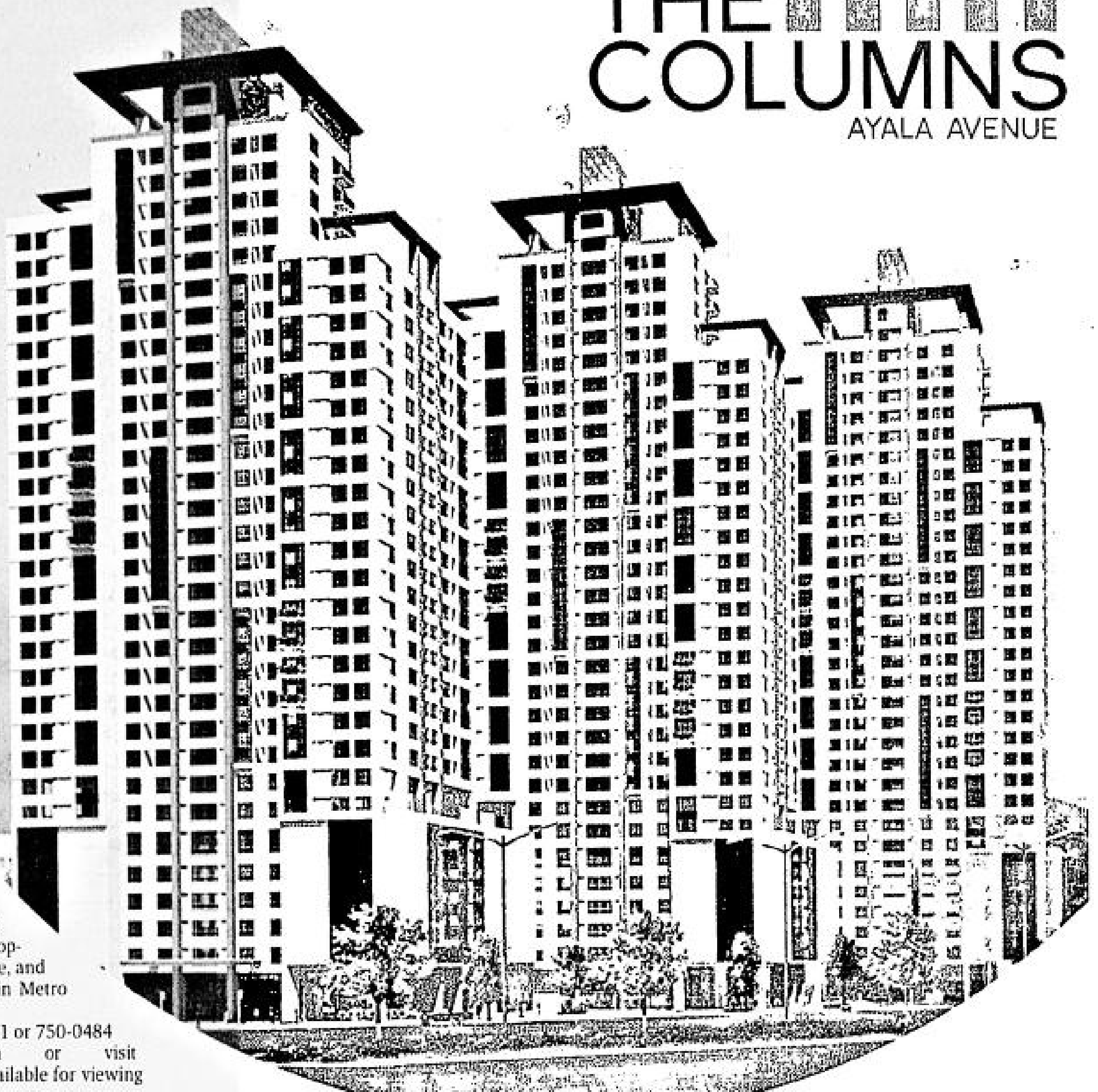
CII is now offering the ultimate chance to become part of this irresistible "vertical village." Buyers who wish to seize this final opportunity to enter into the good life at The Columns, Ayala Avenue are able to avail of special Zero Downpayment schemes.

If it sounds like an entire world in microcosm, that's what it's meant to be: as close to having everything at hand as you can get, at a price range within your grasp. With all the perks and peace of mind of living in a property conceived, constructed, managed and supported by Community Innovations and its parent, Ayala Land.

The Columns, Ayala Avenue. It's right there to get everywhere.

Interested to live in The Columns? Call 750-0471 or 750-0484 or email cii-sales@ayalaland.com.ph or visit www.thecolumns.com.ph. Model units are available for viewing at the 3rd Floor Glorietta 3, Ayala Center.

THE COLUMNS
AYALA AVENUE



nue Offers New Co-ownership Payment Scheme

payment schemes for investors and interested buyers. These payment plans all feature low amortization rates, low downpayment terms, and personal service in assembling a scheme that's just right for the buyer.

These flexible schemes, and now the new option of co-ownership, are a trademark of Community Innovations's commitment to the young urban achiever. If you work in the Makati central business district and you want a stylish home both affordable and close to work, The Columns is the ideal choice. It's made to meet your needs and surpasses your expectations.

The Columns, Ayala Avenue has already become one of the hottest properties in Makati. With its new co-ownership payment option, it now becomes one of the most affordable, and offers one of the best valued opportunities in Metro Manila.

Want to live in The Columns? Call 750-0471 or 750-0484 or email cii-sales@ayalaland.com.ph or visit www.thecolumns.com.ph. Model units are available for viewing at the 3rd Floor Glorietta 3, Ayala Center.

mmunityinnovations.com.ph.

COMMUNITY
INNOVATIONS INC.
An AYALA Company

COMMUNITY
INNOVATIONS INC.
An AYALA Company

For Young Urban Achievers

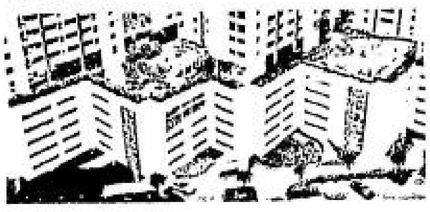
Community Innovations, Inc. (CII) is dedicated to creating vibrant communities designed for the lifestyles of young urban achievers in Metro Manila and beyond. Whether in a suburban subdivision or an urban tower, CII aims to create places where gracious living, neighborliness and humanistic values are respected and affirmed. CII achieves this through master planning and innovation, and offers its products at affordable price points and flexible payment terms. As an Ayala company, CII combines forward-thinking concepts with the tried-and-tested reputation of the nation's most respected real estate developer.

The Columns, Ayala Avenue

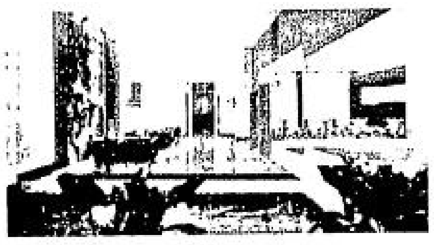
Rising on Ayala Avenue is CII's most exciting urban project, the three-tower condominium complex called The Columns, Ayala Avenue.

THE COLUMNS

Located at the intersection of Ayala Avenue and Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, The Columns places the whole of the Makati central business district at its doorstep. The young urban professionals who work in Makati's financial, commercial and service industries won't find a better home or a better investment within five minutes of their workplace.



Its Ground Floor provides the perfect place to hang out with its coffee bars, al fresco dining, and plazas, as well as offering stores and services for residents.



At the top of its seven-storey podium, The Columns sports a Recreational Club packed with amenities for the whole family. Swimming pools for the grownups and the kids, a jogging path high above the city streets, function rooms and outdoor event space, a daycare center and playground, a fitness center, game room and more - all integrated into a leisure experience that's like owning a club membership.

The Columns, Ayala Avenue has it all, all in one place, right in the middle of Makati.

Building Communities

CII made its reputation with the runaway success of Verdana Homes along Daang Hari road in Bacoor. Faithful to its mission to build communities for young urban achievers, CII launched other developm ne Verdana Village Center righ across Verdana Homes, and Verdana Homes Mamplasan, the installment of the Verdana Homes brand at the gateway to the Ayala South. And CII in tanden are Ayala Land reaches a higher state of grac with Serendra at the Fort

Verdana Homes

Verdana Homes

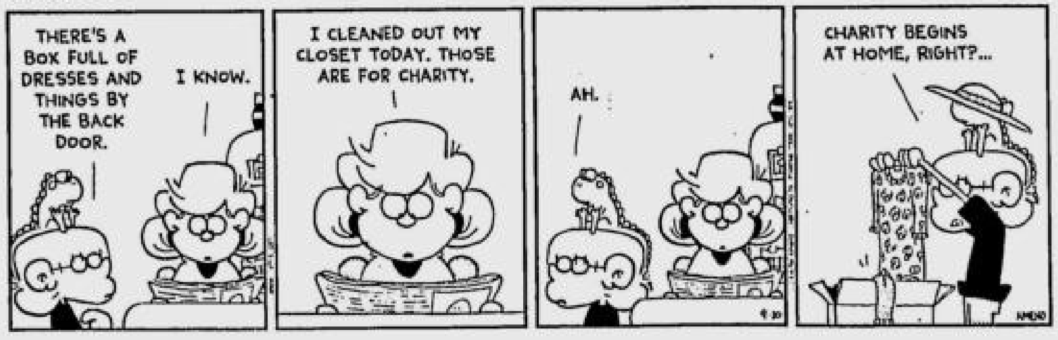
Verdana Village Center

Serendra

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

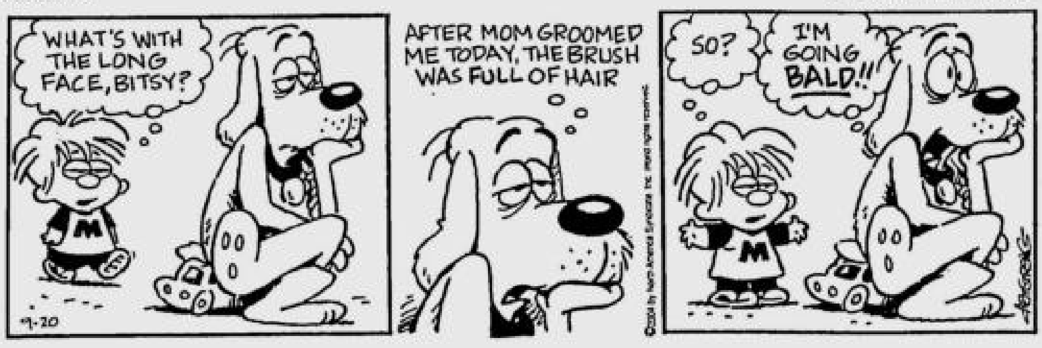
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


THERE'S A BOX FULL OF DRESSES AND THINGS BY THE BACK DOOR.
I KNOW.
I CLEANED OUT MY CLOSET TODAY. THOSE ARE FOR CHARITY.
AH.
CHARITY BEGINS AT HOME, RIGHT?...
9-20
AMEND

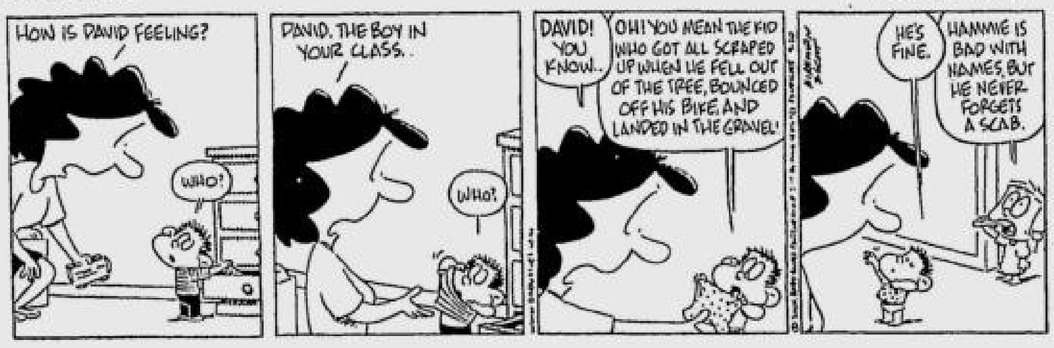
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


WHAT'S WITH THE LONG FACE, BITSY?
AFTER MOM GROOMED ME TODAY, THE BRUSH WAS FULL OF HAIR
SO?
I'M GOING BALD!!
9-20
ARMSTRONG

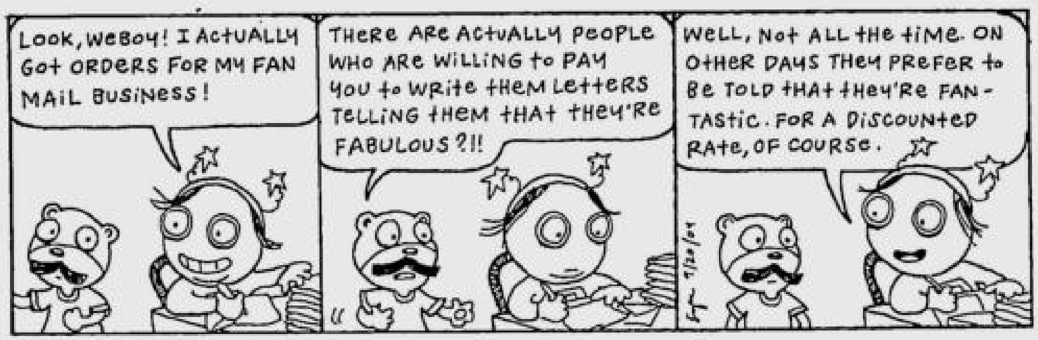
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


HOW IS DAVID FEELING?
WHO?
DAVID. THE BOY IN YOUR CLASS.
WHO?
DAVID! YOU KNOW..
OH! YOU MEAN THE KID WHO GOT ALL SCRAPED UP WHEN HE FELL OUT OF THE TREE, BOUNCED OFF HIS BIKE AND LANDED IN THE GRAVEL!
HE'S FINE.
HAMMIE IS BAD WITH NAMES, BUT HE NEVER FORGETS A SCAB.

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


LOOK, WEBOY! I ACTUALLY GOT ORDERS FOR MY FAN MAIL BUSINESS!
THERE ARE ACTUALLY PEOPLE WHO ARE WILLING TO PAY YOU TO WRITE THEM LETTERS TELLING THEM THAT THEY'RE FABULOUS?!!
WELL, NOT ALL THE TIME. ON OTHER DAYS THEY PREFER TO BE TOLD THAT THEY'RE FANTASTIC. FOR A DISCOUNTED RATE, OF COURSE.
9/20/04

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You are a producer. You can run or manage any situation. You understand the needs of a group, and you know how to get others to cooperate. You can repair things, and you can repair relationships. (You're very clever and practical.) You understand people because you observe them. This year could be one of the most powerful years of your life. **Birthdate of:** Sophia Loren, actress; Gary Cole, actor; Jelly Roll Morton, musician.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Today and tomorrow you'll feel unusually optimistic about your job. You see ways to improve things and make yourself more popular with everyone. Yay!

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You've got big ideas about vacations, theater, the entertainment business, the hospitality industry and educating children. You've also got big goals about sports. Go with your gut!

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Your plans connected with home, family and real estate are expansive and optimistic right now. You're riding high! You can pull off what you want to do. Dream big.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You're so convincing today, you can knock people off their feet! Your upbeat enthusiasm lets you sell, market, influence, teach, write and persuade everyone you meet today. (Watch out world!)

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Money is power. It's also energy. Today you're in touch with this principle. You see what you can achieve through the power of money (especially when you're generous with it).

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You feel bigger than life today and tomorrow. That's because lucky Jupiter now lines up with the Sun. This gives you boisterous energy and lots of confidence.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): For a number of reasons, you're starting to see the value of taking time to watch the grass grow and to smell the roses. Life's hustle and bustle can make you miss the only thing you have—the present moment.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Group activities are extremely successful today. Accept all invitations. Join clubs, organizations and committees. Attend conferences. Talk to friends about your dreams for the future.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): People think you're the cat's pajamas today. It looks like you've got it all. This is a good time to swing big deals and start new ventures.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Travel plans look exciting. Ditto for publishing ideas. Discussions with others about philosophy, religion and politics get you really excited. You see so many possibilities in everything!

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Today and tomorrow are extremely beneficial to you in terms of gifts, money, extended credit, reduced debt, inheritances, opportunities and advantages. Other people can help you now!

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Relationships are so much improved today and tomorrow. You feel lucky to have your loved ones in your life (and you are).

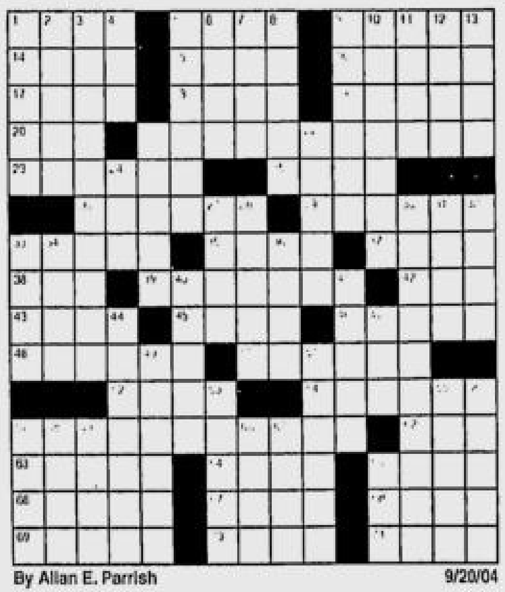
DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS

1 Daddy
5 Owl's outburst
9 "Gaslight" director
14 Eurasian deer
15 Jane Austen novel
16 Kind of acid
17 Miners' rocks
18 Holiday song
19 Hitler's architect Albert
20 Org. of Roddick
21 Eastwood film
23 Fruity cocktail
25 Practice boxing
26 Suckled
29 "_ and Louise"
33 Beeped
35 _ me tangere
37 Fly high
38 Frequently, in verse
39 Pirate a plane
42 Spanish river
43 Coll. employee
45 Kampuchea's neighbor
46 Without conclusion
48 Mogadishu resident
50 One of the Virgin Islands
52 Horn signal
54 Mexican muralist
57 Eyeball
62 Embrace
63 Declares
64 Gravy server
65 Pork fat
66 Scope
67 A few
68 Canal of song
69 Sen. Kefauver
70 Chicago's Sue, for one
71 English school

DOWN

1 Event before a golf tournament
2 Major artery
3 Lady Godiva's audience
4 Mooncalf
5 Poincare and Matisse
6 "Typee" sequel
7 Warning sign
8 Bath powders
9 Moorish fortress
10 Sports officials
11 German port
12 Like Nash's lama
13 Actor Calhoun
21 Honored poets
22 Of the eyes
24 Weekday abbr.
27 Irish New Age singer
28 Martial arts facilities
30 "Blue Moon" lyricist
31 Primary
32 SS Rodriguez
33 Explodes
34 '60s hairdo
36 Final
40 Carbon-arc lamp
41 Campbell's Soup rival
44 Ornate Easter eggs creator
47 Now I see!
49 Rents out
51 "I Gotcha" singer
53 Big name in brewing
55 Knickknack
56 City north of Salt Lake
57 Biblical wood
58 Gardner and others
59 Daily Planet reporter
60 Former queen of Jordan
61 Lady's title
65 David _ Roth



By Allan E. Parrish
Mentor, OH

9/20/04

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

I	T	S	E	L	F	■	A	C	C	E	S	S	E	S
M	O	H	A	I	R	■	S	E	R	G	E	A	N	T
P	R	I	S	S	Y	■	C	R	E	A	T	U	R	E
E	M	M	E	T	■	D	R	E	A	D	■	N	O	R
R	E	M	■	■	A	L	I	A	S	■	S	T	U	N
I	N	E	D	U	C	A	B	L	E	■	T	E	T	E
A	T	R	O	P	I	N	E	■	■	C	A	R	E	S
■	■	■	D	O	D	O	■	F	L	A	T	■	■	■
A	L	I	G	N	■	■	D	A	Y	L	I	G	H	T
R	E	N	I	■	F	E	E	T	O	F	C	L	A	Y
C	A	R	P	■	O	L	D	E	N	■	■	E	R	R
A	D	O	■	F	R	A	U	D	■	C	L	A	R	A
D	I	A	L	O	G	I	C	■	O	R	I	S	O	N
I	N	D	I	G	E	N	T	■	R	E	N	O	W	N
A	S	S	E	S	S	E	D	■	T	E	E	N	S	Y

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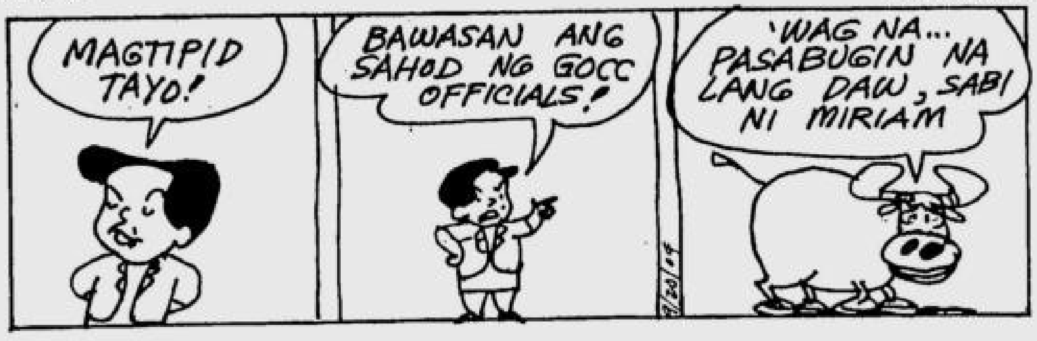
9/20/04

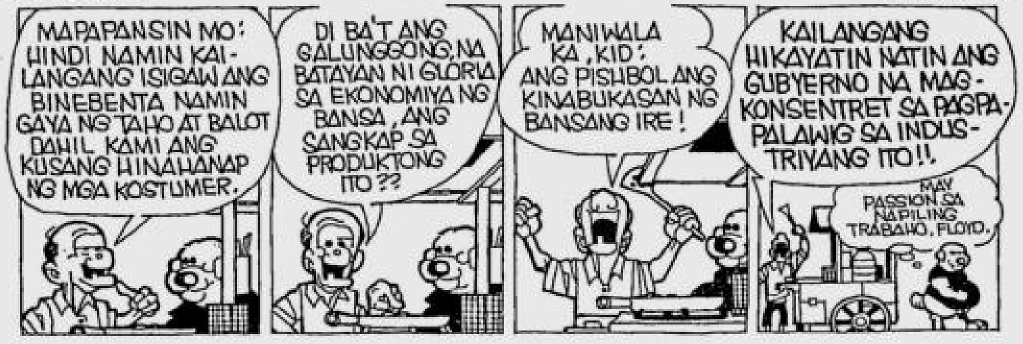
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


MAGTIPID TAYO!
BAWASAN ANG SAHOD NG GOCC OFFICIALS!
'WAG NA... PASABUGIN NA LANG DAW, SABI NI MIRIAM
9/20/04

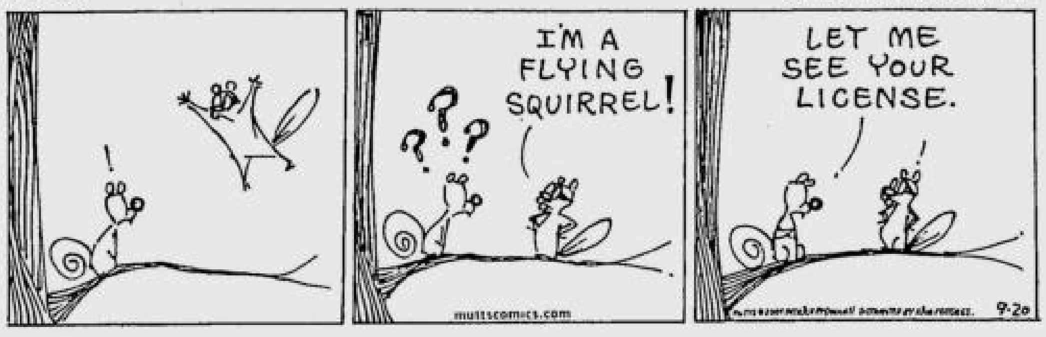
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


MAPAPANSIN MO: HINDI NAMIN KAILANGANG ISIGAW ANG BINEBENTA NAMIN GAYA NG TAHO AT BALOT DAHIL KAMI ANG KUSANG HINAHANAP NG MGA KOSTUMER.
DI BA'T ANG GALUNGGONG, NA BATAYAN NI GLORIA SA EKONOMIYA NG BANSA, ANG SANGKAP SA PRODUKTONG ITO??
MANIWALA KA, KID: ANG PISHBOL ANG KINABUKASAN NG BANSANG IRE!
KAILANGANG HIKAYATIN NATIN ANG GUBYERNO NA MAG-KONSENTRET SA PAGPAPALAWIG SA INDUSTRIYANG ITO!!
MAY PASSION SA NAPILING TRABAHO, FLOYD.

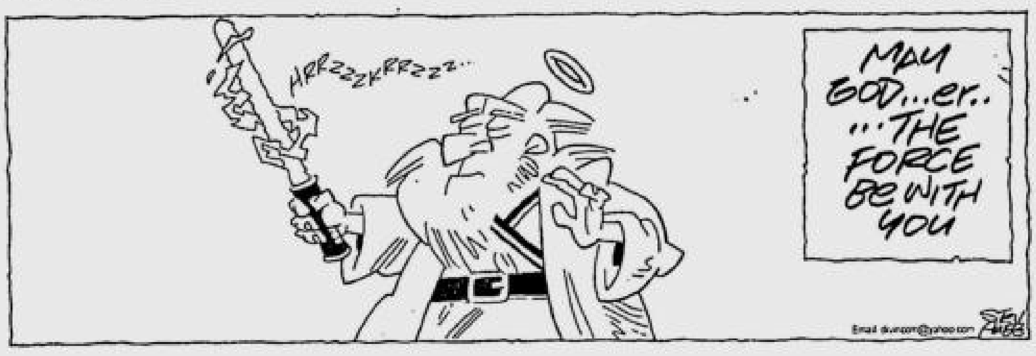
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


!
??
I'M A FLYING SQUIRREL!
LET ME SEE YOUR LICENSE.
!
muttscomics.com
9-20

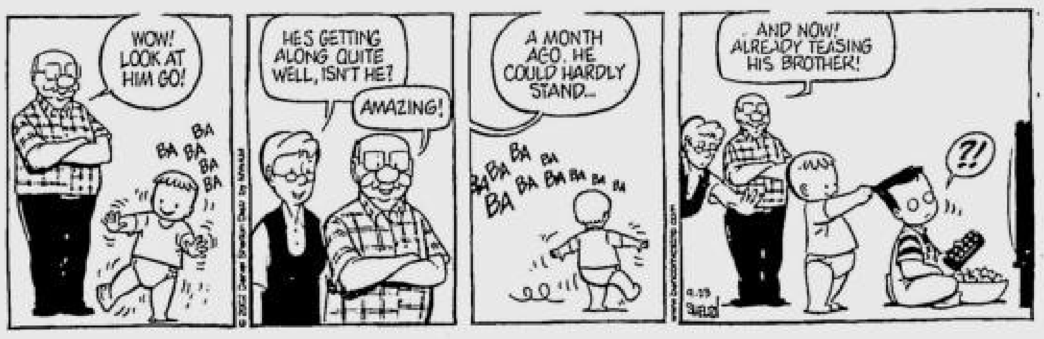
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


HRRZZZKRRZZZ..
MAY GOD...er.. ...THE FORCE BE WITH YOU

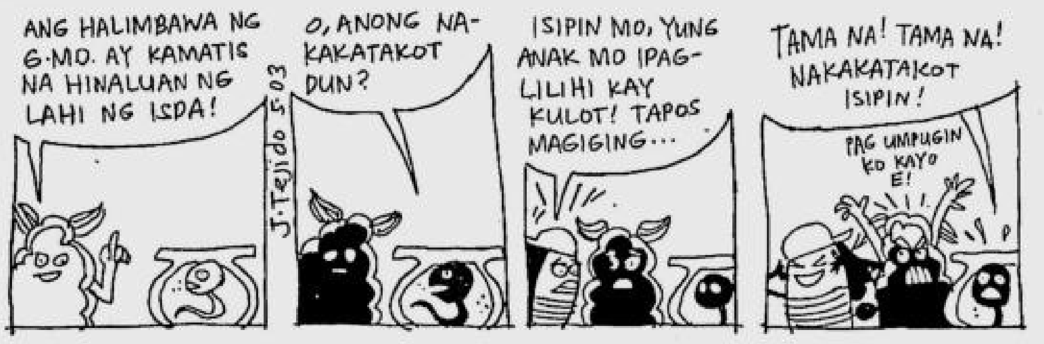
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


WOW! LOOK AT HIM GO!
BA BA BA BA BA
HE'S GETTING ALONG QUITE WELL, ISN'T HE?
AMAZING!
A MONTH AGO, HE COULD HARDLY STAND...
BA BA BA BA BA BA BA BA BA
AND NOW! ALREADY TEASING HIS BROTHER!
?!

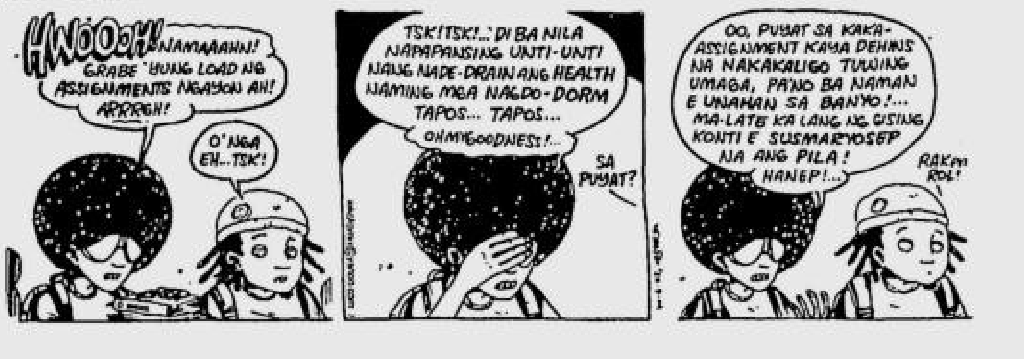
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


ANG HALIMBAWA NG G.M.O. AY KAMATIS NA HINALUAN NG LAHI NG ISDA!
J. Tejido 5.03
O, ANONG NAKAKATAKOT DUN?
ISIPIN MO, YUNG ANAK MO IPAGLILIHI KAY KULOT! TAPOS MAGIGING...
TAMA NA! TAMA NA! NAKAKATAKOT ISIPIN!
PAG UMPUGIN KO KAYO E!

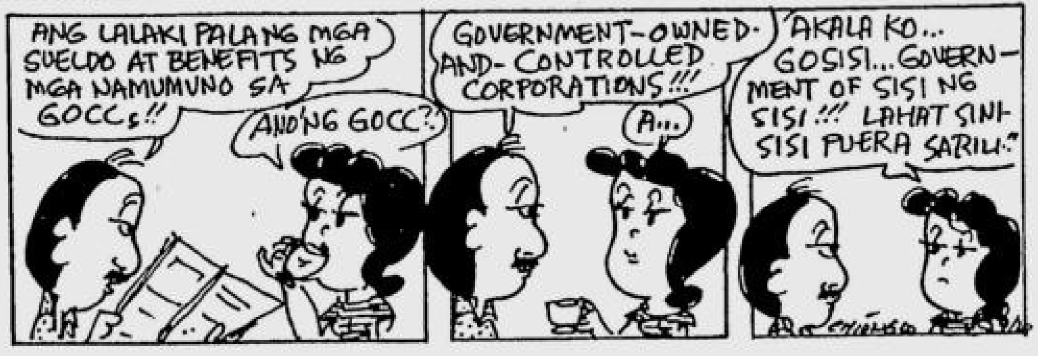
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


HWOOOH! NAMAAAHN! GRABE 'YUNG LOAD NG ASSIGNMENTS NGAYON AH! ARRRGH!
O' NGA EH...TSK!
TSK! TSK!.. DI BA NILA NAPAPANSING UNTI-UNTI NANG NADE-DRAIN ANG HEALTH NAMING MGA NAGDO-DORM TAPOS... TAPOS...
OHMYGOODNESS!...
SA PUYAT?
OO, PUYAT SA KAKA-ASSIGNMENT KAYA DEHINS NA NAKAKALIGO TUWING UMAGA, PA'NO BA NAMAN E UNAHAN SA BANYO!... MA-LATE KA LANG NG GISING KONTI E SUSMARYOSEP NA ANG PILA!
HANEP!...
RAKENROL!

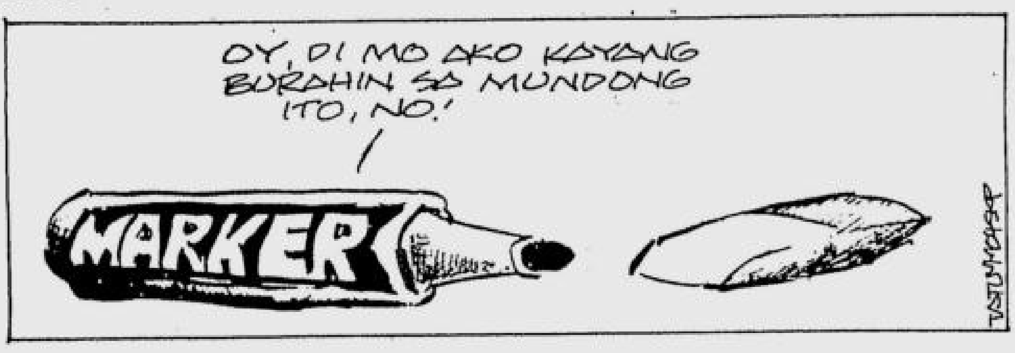
LOVEKNOTS

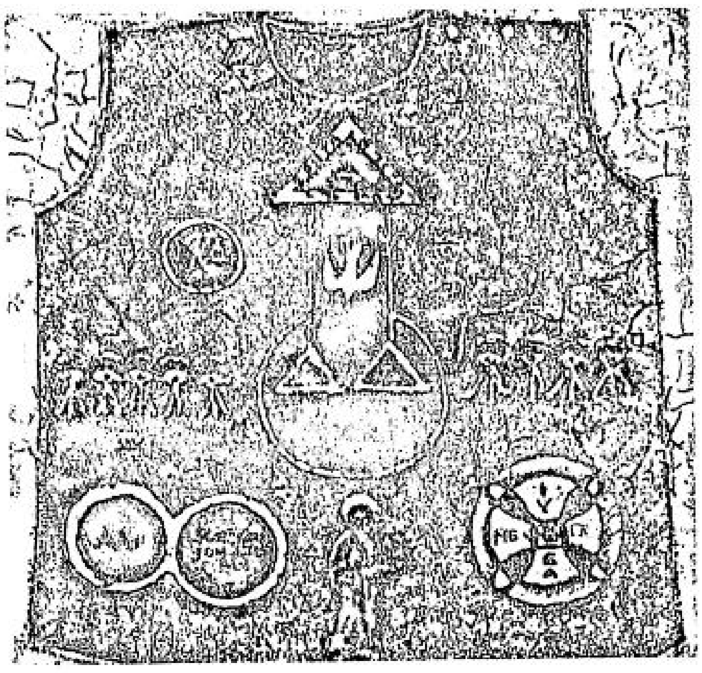
BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


ANG LALAKI PALA NG MGA SUELDO AT BENEFITS NG MGA NAMUMUNO SA GOCCs!!
ANO'NG GOCC?
GOVERNMENT-OWNED-AND-CONTROLLED CORPORATIONS!!!
A...
AKALA KO... GOSISI... GOVERNMENT OF SISI NG SISI!!! LAHAT SINISISI PUERA SARILI."
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

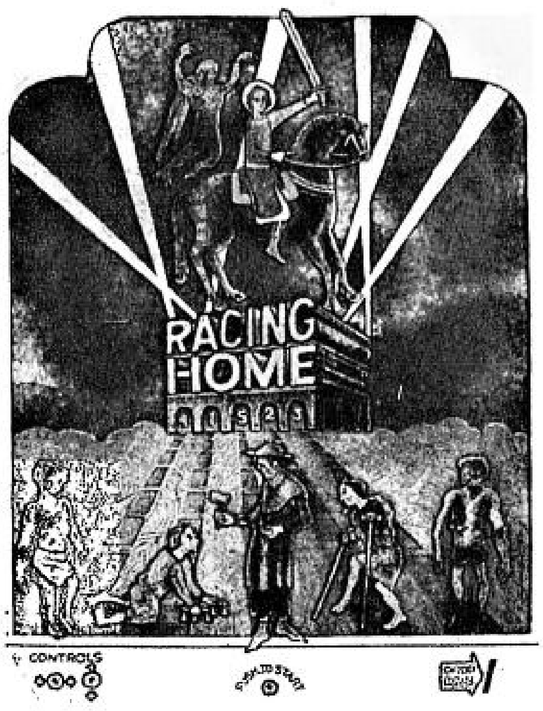
BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


OY, DI MO AKO KAYANG BURAHIN SA MUNDONG ITO, NO!
MARKER
TATUM

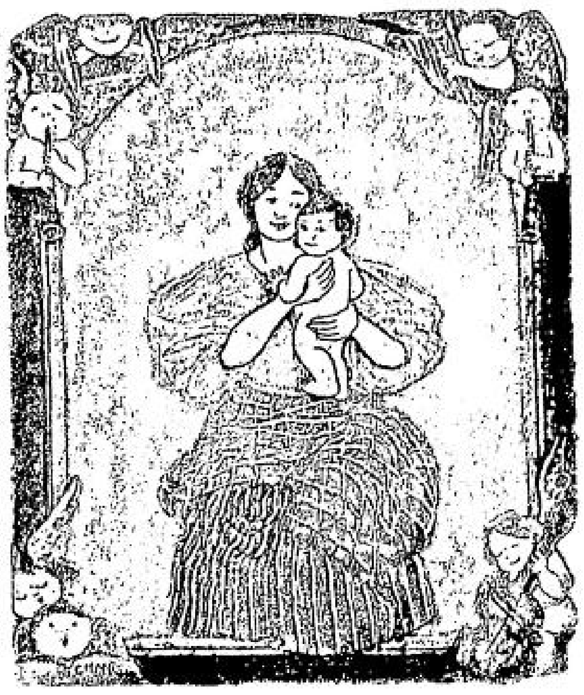


THE *ANTING-ANTING* transforms from a small medallion worn around the neck to giant, talismanic proportions as it is emblazoned on the front of a T-shirt, possibly to ward off larger evils from its wearer.

Ofelia Gelvezón Téqui's prints bring our collective memories and shared values back to life



HOME is where we all want to be in the end, after pursuing our individual paths to get there.



THE NAIF Madonna and Child reflects the blind faith of the Filipino that the power of religious icons can perform miracles during times of need.

Everyday Pinoy culture writ large

IT'S a common misconception that preserving cultural heritage happens within a vacuum.

Preserving old buildings or historic towns as monuments is pointless when daily life is excluded from the heritage structures. Heritage goes beyond old buildings, historic towns and traditional landscapes. It includes the visual arts, music, literature and crafts. Fashion, cuisine and even our political and social history are part of heritage as well.

The ordinary is heritage, too. What we see as ordinary, everyday street life is a reflection of our shared heritage that is the basis of our unmistakable Pinoy identity.

Brilliant color

Prints by Ofelia Gelvezón Téqui (on view until Oct. 5 at the Hiraya Gallery, 530 UN Ave., Ermita, Manila) seize images from our collective memory to show that tradition does provide the basis for us to make sense of our turbulent present.

PRIDE OF PLACE

Augusto F. Villalon

The imagery of her prints reinterprets some of the deep-seated currents in the Pinoy collective memory, particularly Christian and folk religious beliefs. Although the images are rooted in the past, nostalgia is absent from her work, which is skillfully executed in brilliant color viscosity.

The other misconception that she disproves is that culture is for the elite. Her images—among them *anting-antings*, Madonnas, pinball machines—are all everyday objects that are part of the lives of the ordinary Pinoy. She digs into this eclectic store of traditional Pinoy folk imagery and surfaces with incisive social commentary on our present situation.

While each day brings our present national situation closer toward Doomsday, her sense of humor diffuses the situation, a reaction typical of Pinoys when faced with difficult situations.

The childlike simplicity of her polychromed Madonnas cradling fat babies remind one of centuries of blind Filipino faith that the Blessed Virgin will always work miracles for those who believe.

The *anting-anting* takes on new meaning. No longer an amulet to hang around the neck, the item is blown up, enlarged and stretched to take over entire T-shirt fronts. Thus, Gelvezón Téqui transforms it into a bigger, improved talisman with increased protective power for its bearer.

Her series of pinball machines promise heavenly rewards for those who have taken the time to acquire the skill to overcome the uncertainty of the game. Dropping another coin into the slot instantly offers a second chance. Nothing is ever lost.

Redemption and resilience

The theme running through her work is that redemption is always at hand, and that the Pinoy always bounces back.

As the exhibition notes state: "The proverbial resilience of the modern Filipinos during times of crisis is the pièce de résistance in the humor and wit of the graphic works of Ofelia Gelvezón Téqui.

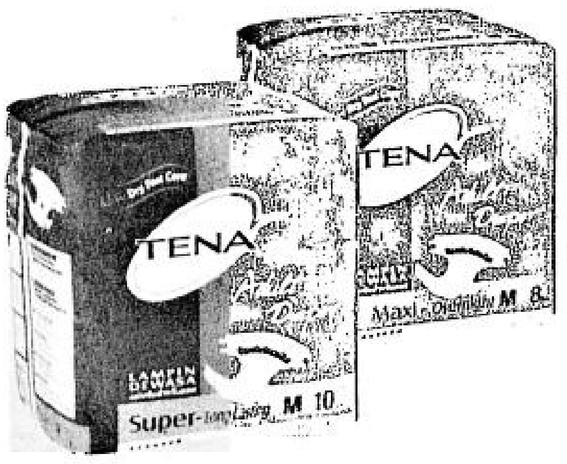
"In her earlier prints, she sets a subjec-

EVERYDAY/C8

You reach an age when you desire the best comfort and protection.

Age makes us crave for better quality of life- one that is marked with absolute security, contentment and a lasting assurance of being valued and cared for. However, incontinence alters one's sense of security, if not for the assurance of a protective partner. TENA has innovative features that provide outstanding leakage security. Designed with a dual-core technology, pads are thinner for ease and mobility, while maintaining its superior absorbency through highly absorbent gels evenly distributed throughout every pad. A dry fast core leaves your skin feeling dry. While curved leg and waist elastic features protect against side leaks and back flows. Standing gathers provide double insurance against side leaks. And if that isn't enough, our wetness indicator tells you when it's time to change.

With TENA Adult Diapers, you can live in greater freedom and comfort than ever before.



For peaceful days and restful nights.

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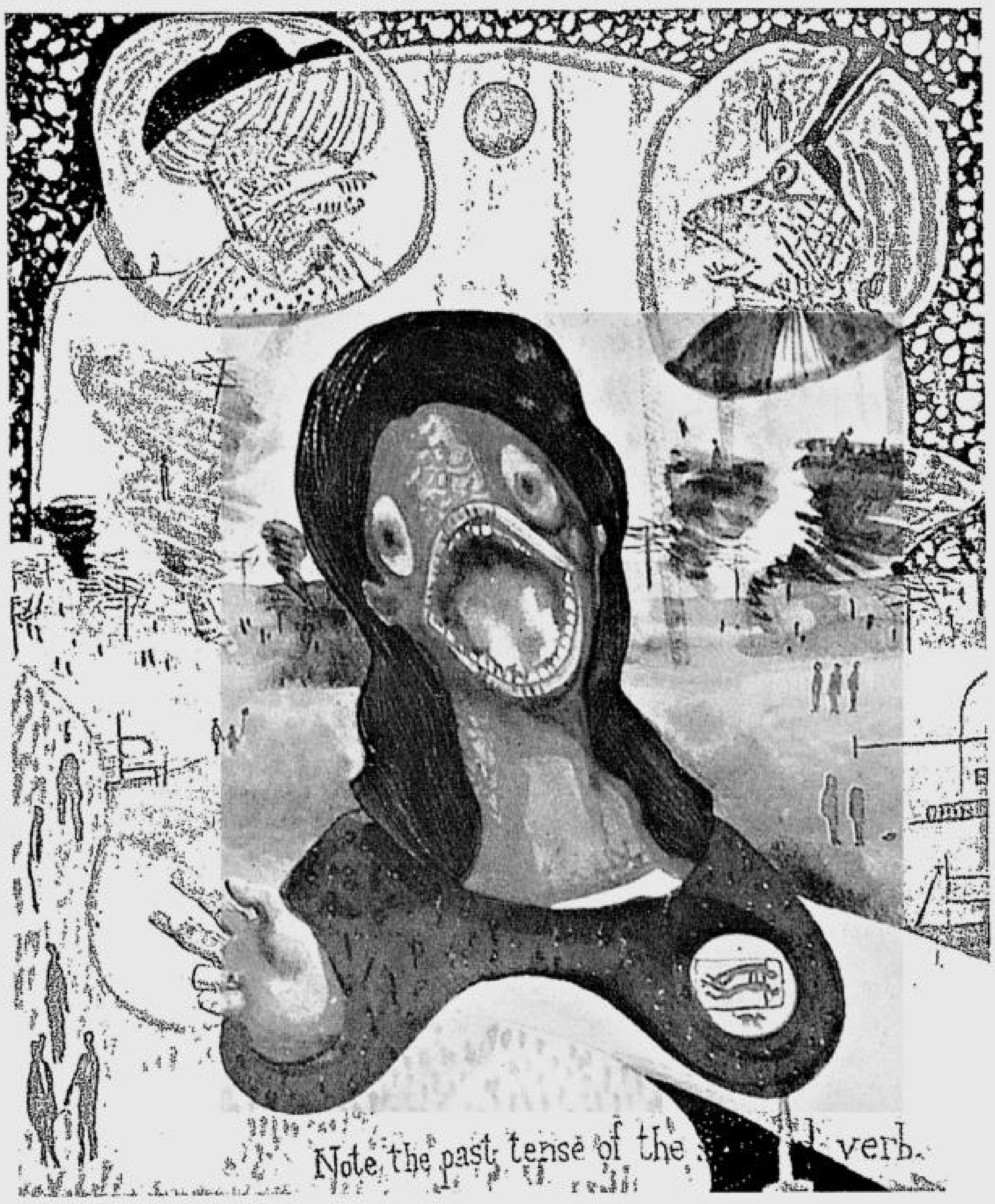
SAMPLES ANYONE?

Know us more intimately. For a free sample of TENA Adult Diapers, simply cut out this portion and fax to 809-1230, or send to SCA Hygiene Products Corporation, P.O. Box 103 Ayala Alabang Village, 1799 Muntinlupa City.

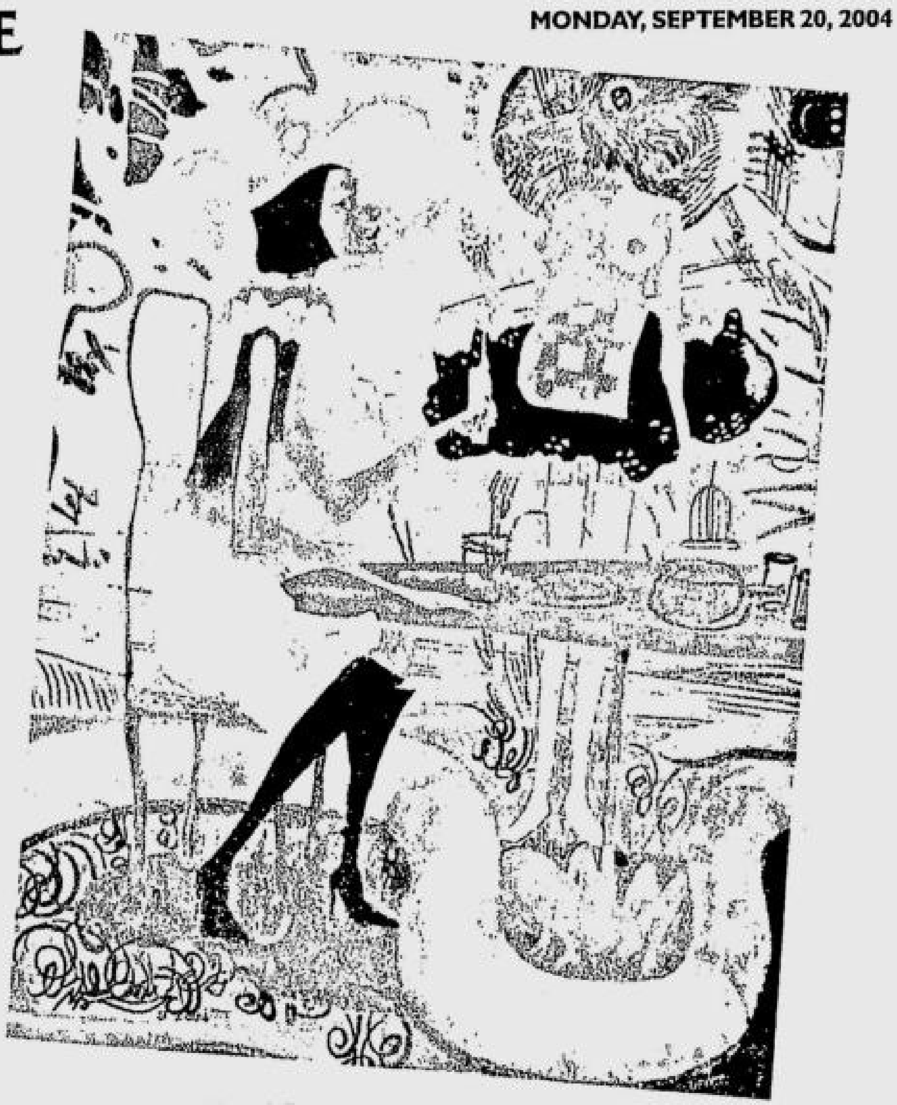
Name of User: First Name M.I. Last Name
Sex:
Birth Date M D Y
Please send free TENA sample to:
Address:
Zip Code:
Tel. No.:
Name of Respondent: First Name M.I. Last Name
Relation to User: ☐ Relative ☐ Professional Caregiver

Please send me a sample pack of:
☐ Super Medium (Day Care)
☐ Maxi Medium (Night Care)

We value your privacy. Rest assured we keep all data in this coupon confidential.
PDI 0920


Note the past tense of the verb.

"ST. Fishhead, Patron Saint of Doormats"



"VALUES of Beautiful People"

Far-out fantasia

By Constantino C. Tejero

QUITE prolific, Jason Moss does innumerable book illustrations, editorial cartoons, comic strips and paintings through his young career.

He is only in his 20s but already he is holding his 11th one-man exhibit, "Head Stands," 15 pieces in watercolor and acrylic on paper, until Sept. 27 in Crucible Gallery at the Artwalk, L/4, Bldg. A, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City.

The exhibit's title, says the artist, has references to astrology and relationships. Here, restive and chaotic images constitute edgy fantasies à la Bosch.

Look at "St. Fishhead, Patron Saint of Doormats." This one has a distinctly Boschean air about it.

The portrait of a red fishhead with blue hair and violet robe may look at first like another outrageous take on the "Mona Lisa." Moss says the image was actually based on a weathervane (note the pivot) from a Flemish painting.

Red stick figures stroll in a green manicured landscape with a turquoise stream, while five tornados spin in the background, carrying some human figures along with telephone poles. Violet cameos of two other fishheads overhead reveal the whole piece to be actually an icon of the Holy Trinity.

"Values of Beautiful People" is a fantasia of pink sky and olive-green ground with a snake as big as a drainpipe. In what appears to be a garden party, a socialite in a propeller hat, ruffed dress and high boots, seated in a high-backed purple chair at a blue table, is talking to a topless housemaid with a green bird's head, holding a feather duster and a birdcage.

Private theater

"The Expense of Spirit" is an equally enigmatic tableau of two nudes, a brown slender male and a chalky obese female. This piece is dominated by red tempered by planes of ochre, orange, gray and off-white.

The woman, in dark shades and bloodied stiletto shoes, holding a long cigarette pipe that could be a Chinese paintbrush, is sitting on a sidewalk with three flat figures (actually a child's drawing transferred by the artist to his work). The man is holding up a slice of watermelon, very red.

Jason Moss is only
in his 20s,
but already
he is holding his 11th
one-man exhibit,
this time of edgy
neo-expressionist
works

The rest of the pieces are similar edgy neo-expressionist works, although Moss may deny it and say he is "into Art Brut since 1999."

It is Art Brut in the sense of private theater ("My work has always been autobiographical, it's an old practice, as what the Masters were always doing"), but the style and imagery are strongly reminiscent of those of Bosch and the expressionists Max Beckmann, James Ensor, José Legaspi, Andres Barrioquinto, even Francesco Clemente.

In fact, Moss acknowledges Filipino expressionists Danny Dalena and Onib Olmedo as early influences, counting them among his favorites along with Barrioquinto, Elmer Borlongan, Ronald Ventura, Fred Esquillo, Kiko Escora, the Surrounded by Water artists, especially Louie Cordero.

A graduate of Fine Arts, major in Advertising, from University of Santo Tomas, Moss held his first show when he was only 17.

He was "discovered" by National Artist Nick Joaquin, who asked him to illustrate his book "Rizal in Saga." To date, he has rendered colorful and imaginative illustrations for nearly 30 books for children.

His interest in mythology, literature and religion nourished his early works. Now he is into the human mind, psychic states, nudes, intense emotions. Imagine what he'll be up to when he reaches his 30s.

Everyday Pinoy culture . . .

From page C7

tive scenario of the Doomsday fears with a take-off from video games littered with Hollywood sci-fi sets. Here she digs into the smugness of Filipinos who adapted themselves to the escapist graphics of video games.

"In her next series, she picks up the reliance of the Filipinos on the wishful invocations to the protecting spirits of the lowly *anting-anting* (talisman). She suggests that the fantasy lies in the relationships of shapes and the etched graphics.

"On the same level of pun, she takes up the pageantry of the Marian icons as a figure of succor for various personal needs.

"Overall, Téqui's works are a sly and impudent look into the extravagances of the Filipinos' imagination as a face-off during moments of crisis. The so-called resilience is, in fact, a lackadaisical attitude and a circumvention away from realities.

"...Ofelia Gelvezón Téqui [is] a sensitive observer of the Filipino spirit."

Yes, she strikes that chord of collective memory that resonates in all of us Pinoys. Her images bring memories and shared values back to life, strong reminders for us that our heritage is, indeed, unique and special, and worth preserving.

E-mail the author at afvillalon@hotmail.com

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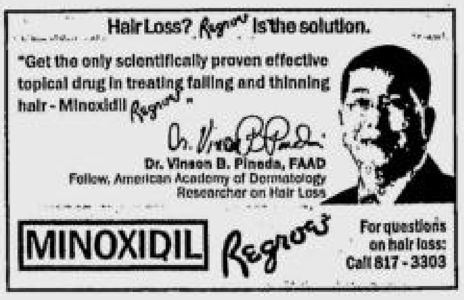
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MANILA PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

In praise of an unsubsidized orchestra

By Pablo A. Tariman
Contributor

AFTER that fairly well-received opening concert of the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra (PPO) last week, music lovers should find time to hear Filipino-American cellist Stephen Framil play as soloist of the Manila Philharmonic Orchestra on Friday, Sept. 24, at the Philamlife Theater.

The conductor is Rodel Colmenar, who passed the test in two exciting concerts in Manila—Rach 3 with Cecile Licad and the San Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra (SMPO) in 2002; and Saint-Säens No. 2 with Licad with MPO last year.

MPO is the same orchestra which accompanied Andrea Bocelli, who broke box-office records for classical concerts in Manila when a whopping 30,000 people (from the elite and the *masa*) attended his one evening of art songs and arias at the Araneta Coliseum early this year.

The MPO under Colmenar is a curious thing. Unlike the PPO and the SMPO, which are subsidized by government and corporate funds, respectively, MPO survives by the skin of its musical teeth, so to speak.

Colmenar said it's only his passion for music that keeps the orchestra alive. "When you love something you do and you feel that you are contributing to improving the quality of life of Filipinos, you just can't stop just because times are difficult," said Colmenar, who used to be with the wind section of the PPO.

"But we are used to hard times because unlike the San Miguel Philharmonic or the Philippine Philharmonic, we thrive without subsidy from the government and corporate entities. In fact, we have to do a lot of pop music to support our season of classical music."

Freaks of nature

Colmenar noted that other countries use classical musicians to lure tourists. In Singapore, they invite Korea's Sumi Jo and USA's Yo Yo Ma to play there and promote tourism. "But in our country, classical musicians are treated like freaks of nature and always have to beg for support. That is the sad part."

Jonathan Velasco, a leading choral conductor, baritone and the only Filipino to sit in the jury of the choral Olympics in Bremen, Germany, will close the MPO season with operatic arias. He told the media that President Macapagal-Arroyo should stop aiming for gold medals in sports and instead focus on the arts.

"President Arroyo should realize that it's in the arts that Filipinos really excel, not in sports," says Velasco, who started as a member of the Philippine Madrigal Singers, which had won golds in various choral Olympics in the '80s.

A Filipino choir also struck gold in the recent choral Olympics in Germany. The UST Singers has become the toast of Europe in the last several years, winning grand prize after grand prize in choral festivals. The Madz, meanwhile, has recently regained its winning form in Spain. Lea Salonga is so far the first and only Filipina to win the Tony Award in USA and the Laurence Olivier Prize in London for a leading role in a Broadway and West End musicale.

"In the last many years, it's only the boxers and crime informants who get millions in cash incentives and other remunerations in proper media-covered ceremonies in Malacañang," said Velasco.

A much sought-after choral specialist in Asia, Velasco has been asked to judge in the 2nd Choral Olympics in Busan, Korea, the 9th International Choir Competition in Budapest, Hungary, the 7th International Choir Contest of Flanders-Maasmechelen in Belgium and the 35th Tolosa International Choral Competition in Tolosa, Spain.

He criticized the alleged order of Malacañang suspending support for all cultural activities as part of the government's austerity program to check the fiscal crisis.

"Music is part of the way of life of Filipinos and to tell them to stop making music to save on costs is like telling them to stop breathing," said Velasco, who graduated with distinction at the Berliner Kirchmusikschule in Germany.

Among the country's distinguished medalists in the art who have put the country in the cultural map are Cecile Licad, the first woman to win the Leventritt Gold Medal in New York (the same medal went to Van Cliburn and Gary Graffman); Rowena Arrieta, winner of the Jose Iturbi piano competition in Spain; tenor Otoniel Gonzaga, winner of an international voice competition in Germany; tenor Noel Velasco, winner of the Luciano Pavarotti contest in Philadelphia; and soprano Andion Fernandez, winner of a voice competition in Spain and Germany with Placido Domingo and Jose Carreras on the jury.

The closest President Arroyo got to the music scene was when she scheduled to watch a concert of Licad with the Manila Philharmonic Orchestra in August last year. She cancelled at the last minute after sending advance presidential guards to the Philamlife Theater.

It didn't occur perhaps to the President that Licad—described by piano icon Martha Argerich of Argentina as the greatest pianist of her generation—is the baptismal goddaughter of Eva Macapagal, her late mom.

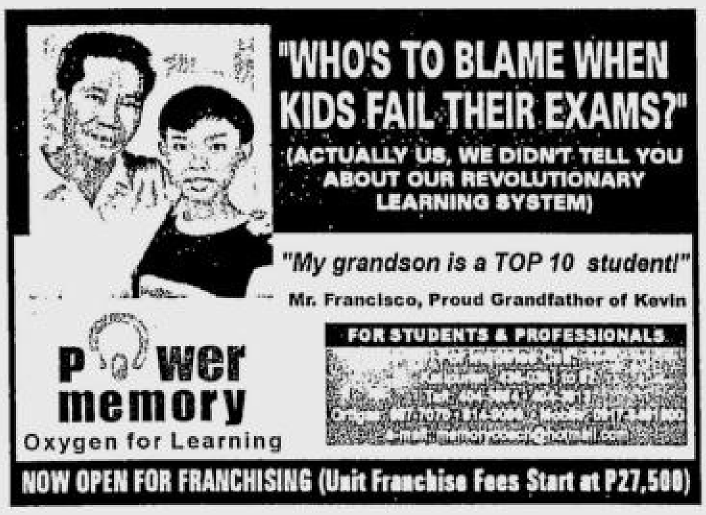
'No fire'

The classic quote of the week is from PPO conductor Eugene Castillo who said in a CCP-sponsored arts forum that Filipino artists lack "fire."

Castillo, who was recently given a Filipino citizenship (he is an American citizen), quoted a poem from Robert Frost, "From what I've tasted of desire/ I hold with those who favor fire." After which Castillo asked, "Where is the fire (of the Filipino artist)?"

It didn't occur to Castillo that he had been given a rare chance before of conducting Licad, who had been described by the Chicago Sun Times, as "one of the flaming talents that comes once or twice in every generation."

If only for his statement, I am boycotting the PPO season.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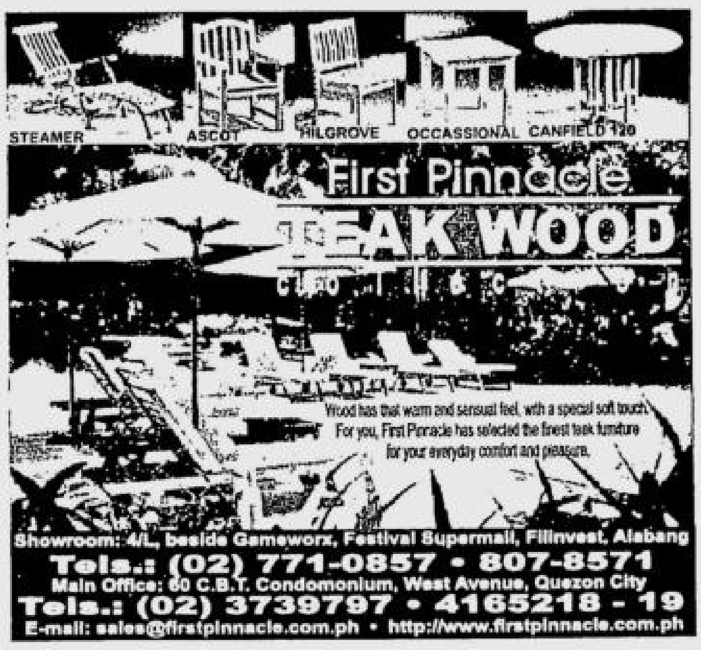
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No child's play

By Amadis Ma. Guerrero
Contributor

This young marimba player could shame the experts

FOURTEEN-YEAR-OLD marimba player Thristan "Tum Tum" Mendoza, assisted by mentor Ruby Salvosa on the piano

THERE were rainshowers that Sunday afternoon at the Luneta's Concert at the Park. The sparse crowd huddled under umbrellas or under the trees and, along with the people seated on both sides of the stage, lustily applauded the young marimba player.

He was Thristan "Tum Tum" Mendoza, 14, who was performing with confidence and brilliance, and assisted on the piano by his teacher, Ruby Salvosa. The compositions being interpreted were not child's play, including Korsakov's "Flight of the Bumblebee," Chopin's "Fantasie Impromptu," De Falla's "Ritual Fire Dance" and Santiago's "Madaling Araw."

As an encore, young Mendoza and teacher Salvosa played selections from "The Phantom of the Opera."

You may not be aware of it when you talk to him (one giveaway is that he does not look at you directly), but Tum Tum is a special child, meaning an autistic child. He is also a musical genius who specializes in the marimba, although he can play many other instruments. And he is good, too, in mathematics.

It turns out that Tum Tum has impressive credentials to his name. He learned to play the marimba at age five, and since then has won numerous national and international awards. He has a CD album which has been released internationally, and in 2001 he was invited to perform at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington DC.

Tum Tum, who is aware of his condition, is the eldest of four children born to the late Victor Mendoza (president of Loyola Memorial Chapels) and to Belinda U. Mendoza, a financial consultant. The others are Rainier, Via and Reena, and they are all musically talented.

Born with perfect pitch, Tum Tum was diagnosed to be autistic at the age of 2 ½. "This is a lifetime condition and it was devastating," recalls his mother Belinda. "But my husband took it positively. He said 'that's okay, that means we will always have this baby with us.'"

At the Montessori school for children with special needs, where Tum Tum first studied, the teachers noticed that he did not play with his schoolmates and preferred to be by himself.

He is now a Grade Eleven (the equivalent of third-year high school) student at the Reedley International School.

"Academically he's higher than his age, academically he is 18 years old," says the mother. "But when it comes to socialization, he is eight years old. He can be near normal, you know. I will do everything and leave the rest to God. God has a purpose for everything. As long as I'm here, I will do everything to help him."

Tum Tum returns her love in full measure: "I obey her instructions always. I will do everything to please her."

"At the Autism Society Philippines, we call his condition 'differently abled,'" adds Belinda.

"He has physical and mental challenges," observes his music teacher Salvosa, Tum Tum's "Tita Ruby." "Their thinking is compartmentalized. If I'm late for the lessons, that's an issue with him."

She laughs, "Outside of music I always argue with him. I'm his therapy. There are some compositions he does not like to play. So I explain why this piece is important. For example, he did not want to play 'The Phantom of the Opera' encore, but since we were in public, he obeyed."

An encounter up close and personal with Tum Tum Mendoza, however brief, can be a rewarding experience. He seems to have a poise and maturity beyond his years (although at one point he started running inside the restaurant). And he speaks with affecting sincerity: "I want to be an inspiration for other autistic children."

DLSU Chorale wins gold in Hungary

THE DLSU Chorale bested 10 other international choirs when it won First Place in the Folkloric Special Category during the Bela Bartok 21st International Choir Competition held in Debrecen, Hungary.

The week-long competition that began July 27 and culminated on Aug. 1 showcased the best and acclaimed chorales from around the world.

Coming from a series of concerts in the US before the competition, DLSU Chorale sang their way to victory in Hungary. Their award-winning repertoire included a vibrant rendition of the traditional love song "Katakataka," and perfectly arranged Idemdem Mallida and Dumbele, two melodies of ethnic origin in the Philippines.

To celebrate their victory, De La Salle University-Manila hosted a homecoming concert for the DLSU Chorale last Sept. 14 at the Don Enrique Yuchengco Hall.

The DLSU Chorale, under the baton of Rodolfo Delarmente since 1987, have performed in Europe and the USA and won various first prize awards in local and international choir competitions.

"DON'T Look Back," by Akihiko Shiota

'Twilight Samurai' opens Japanese film festival

THE FIRST full-scale period film directed by accomplished Japanese director Yoji Yamada, "Twilight Samurai" (Tasogare Seibei, 2002) will be featured in Eiga Sai 2004, the Japanese Film Festival. This film was nominated for the Foreign Language Film category at the 76th Oscar Awards.

"Twilight Samurai" is a story about a low-level samurai family, headed by a widower raising two daughters and his mother, who's lapsing into senility. The little action in this film shows how far Seibei (Hiroyuki Sanada) has drifted from his professional prowess. He earns his keep as a scribe and an insect trap maker. When he is called on to defend the honor of his clan, his skill is resurrected although his heart is not in it.

Preview screenings had been shown at the UP Film Institute on Sept. 7-11. The film festival officially reels off with an invitational screening on Sept. 29 at the Cultural Center of the Philippines Little Theater at 7 p.m. Regular screenings will be shown at the CCP Dream Theater from Sept. 30-Oct. 3, The Podium, Oct. 6, and at the SM Megamall, Oct. 7-12.

A highlight of the opening ceremony is the screening of "Waterboys" (2001). Other films to be featured are Akihiko Shiota's "Don't Look Back (Dokomademo Ikou, 1999)," Itsumichi Isomura's "Give It All (Ganbatte Ikimassyoi, 1998)," Ryosuke Hashiguchi's "Hush (2001)" and Takashi Yamazaki's "Juvenile (2000)."

Eiga Sai 2004 is sponsored by The Japan Foundation-Manila in cooperation with the UP Film Institute, Cultural Center of the Philippines, The Podium and SM Megamall.

Admission is free. Call 8116155 or e-mail@jfmo.org.ph

Fresh sounds from the PPO

By Antonio C. Hila
Contributor

EUGENE Castillo made his much-expected debut at the opening concert of the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra's current season as its new music director and principal conductor.

Perhaps because the PPO is under the stewardship of a new conductor, the audience was extra generous, applauding practically in between the four movements of Brahms' Fourth Symphony in utter disregard of the artistic norm that disapproves of such gesture.

Under Castillo, the PPO sported a fresh symphonic sound, with a keen sensitivity to ensemble blending.

In a previous conversation, the conductor mentioned that he intends to introduce "new" works—meaning works that are rarely performed on the local concert stage—in the first half of each concert program, with the last half devoted to standard symphonic works.

The program of this season's opening concert followed this format. Perhaps as a salute to the countries where his cultural roots lie, he chose the works of Filipino and American composers: Angel Peña (b.1921) and Samuel Barber (1910-1981), to grace the first half of the concert, with Brahms' (1833-1897) Symphony No. 4 in E minor, Op. 98 comprising the last half.

Eclectic work

Peña's Trinity: A Symphonic Cycle (1984), which received its world premiere performance, was a testament to eclecticism: snatches of Prokofieff and Ravel could easily be discerned, investing the work with a universal character that transcends the Indian cultural orientation of the work upon which the program is based.

The work is a compact single movement in three parts that follow a schizophrenic disposition, combining bi-polar dynamics expressed either in slow or fast pacing, prayerfully serene or persuasively celebrative moods, and heightened tension or abandoned relaxation. The work exploited the utmost in terms of orchestration, which Castillo deftly handled, wielding his baton triumphantly.

Afterwards, he properly acknowledged Peña, who ascended the stage and received a lei. Peña is one of the few remaining senior members of the League of Filipino Composers who still actively composes. One hopes this inclusion of a Philippine work in the PPO's concerts would continue, as it was vigorously done in the CCP's early years.

The works of the American composer, Samuel Barber, are seldom heard on the local concert stage. The conductor informed the audience that the Adagio for Strings was the first piece he had ever conducted at the CCP, 11 years ago.

Indeed, conducting it again was a nostalgic "Coming Home," which was the apt title for this concert. There was nostalgia, too, in listening to the silken strains of the string section of the PPO that throbbed once more with life!

Camille Lopez-Molina has gloriously transformed her vocal instrument from a forgettable mezzo to an elegant lyric. Too bad, it did not measure up to the spinto demand of the piece. The orchestra practically drowned it. But rather than forcing out her voice, Lopez-Molina maintained the integrity of its lovely lyric sheen.

Her voice is perhaps still in transition, technically speaking. Surely, she has discarded the "Manila sound," the forced-out vocal orientation that her voice sported while still in Manila, in lieu of a more suave cantilena that could become full or mature in due time.

It is interesting to note that the late soprano, Eleanor Steber, for whom Barber composed Knoxville: Summer of 1915, Op.24, started out as a light soprano, her voice described as "sweet as an angel." But later, she acquired a spinto sheen, her voice becoming "sweet but full." By the time Barber composed the song, her voice had already the weight to evoke the earthy lyricism of Barber's music.

To strike a balance between the symphonic and vocal sounds—but not compromising the artistic standard of expressing the symphonic bent of the piece—seemed impossible for conductor Castillo to achieve. Diction was indistinct. There is no doubt, however, that in due time, Lopez-Molina will become a celebrated lyric soprano. Already, her vocal transformation is a big accomplishment.

Big distraction

Regarding the visual projection that accompanied the performances on the stage, one can simply say it was a nuisance, with no useful impact at all. If the idea was to integrate the visual and aural arts, not to mention the narrative, the projection was an utter failure. It just materialized, and was a big distraction. The audience should have been properly apprised about it rather than allowed to do a guessing game.

Under new conductor Eugene Castillo, the orchestra sported a revivified symphonic sound, with a keen sensitivity to ensemble blending

This is also true of the lighting design effected on Peña's work. The intention, of course, is well-appreciated: that of tearing down the disciplinal boundaries of the arts to allow integration and achieve a holistic artistic experience. But this has to be explained, however, through the souvenir program, properly headed "Musical/Artistic Director's Note," as the case may be.

After intermission, Castillo briskly walked toward the podium with his long hair now gathered in a ponytail, a stark contrast to his almost surreptitious entrance at the start through the poorly lighted narrow aisle of the violin section.

It was in this magnificent Brahms work where the PPO musicians once more showed their mettle. Castillo succeeded in drawing out the orchestra's luster, all expressed in fine ensemble playing with utmost attention to tonal balancing.

From where I was seated, on the second row, orchestra left, directly in front of the violin section, I cherished the treatment of the symphonic idea from one section to the other, including passages for solo instruments, with my eyes widely open, looking for the other musicians beyond the violin section essaying the melodic line—but to no avail.

Castillo, who conducted sans score, breezed through with solid ease. He read Brahms with such a consuming passion, expressed in incisive gestures and cueing. At one point, his right arm hit his glasses, which his left arm caught, and smartly slipped into his left pocket somewhere in the first movement; from then on, he conducted without the glasses.

The second movement was engaging, as the last movement was invigorating. Brahms is truly a master of the variation form; listening to the variations based on a repeated melodic idea, passacaglia, a baroque dance form that the composer based his work on, was an absolute aural delight. Castillo treated the movement with passionate vigor, which reached its height in the well-developed coda.

Warm applause burst at the end, and the conductor acknowledged some calls. But when he started acknowledging the principal musicians of each section, some, especially in the wind section, refused to stand. I told myself I would refuse to see any PPO concerts in the future if CCP would seat me adjacent to the stage. I should not see things which I could not bear seeing.

MAESTRO Eugene Castillo wielding the baton

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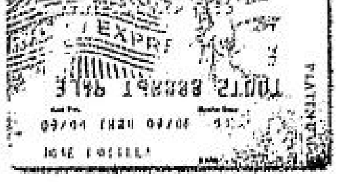

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THE WORLD OF PLATINUM AWAITS

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Bravo, Ballet Manila!

THEY were greeted with enthusiasm and sent off with accolades. Twenty-five young Filipino dancers, who proudly wore their maroon Ballet Manila jackets, became the darlings of the recent Aberdeen International Youth Festival, which put together some of the best dance, music and theatrical groups from 15 countries in a much-awaited annual celebration in Aberdeen, Scotland.

BM Ballet Master Osias Barroso recounts with pride the reaction of Phylia Poh, artistic director of the Singapore dance delegation: "One look at our dancers during rehearsals and she immediately said, 'They are Vaganova trained!' She could tell at first glance because of the skill and technique displayed by the company, even during rehearsals. Before we left, she went up to us and said: 'I am very proud to be an Asian because you are also Asians and you excel at what you do. Today, the whole festival will be talking about you. If you continue that kind of dancing and discipline, tomorrow the world will talk about you."

Barroso, who is also the company's principal danseur, sat it out in the sidelines in Aberdeen "simply because I'm overage!" he says. He points out that he and Lisa Macuja-Elizalde, BM's artistic director and principal ballerina, instead saw the Aberdeen Festival as a perfect opportunity to test how the company would fare without their highly popular ballet tandem.

"We were not disappointed," says Barroso. "Now, more than ever, we are convinced that Ballet Manila can stand on its own, with or without Lisa or myself. The company is ready."

An equally elated Macuja-Elizalde agrees. "I'm extremely happy because Ballet Manila scored a victory without me," she says. She notes that BM's participation at the Aberdeen Festival was very special to her for a purely sentimental reason: She danced at the very same event at age 14 while a member of Dance Theater Philippines 25 years ago.

CIELO Almeida, official courier of Ballet Manila, Gerardo Francisco, Marian Faustino, Osias Barroso and Susan Macuja with the Lord Provost (center) during the reception and awarding of certificates night

Now, as her very own Ballet Manila looks forward to celebrating its 10th anniversary in February and with at least three generations of BM-trained dancers in its professional ranks, Macuja-Elizalde is assured that her efforts are bearing fruit, not just for the company but for the future of Philippine dance.

Accompanying the dancers as tour director was Lisa's own mother, Ms Susan Macuja, who is lovingly regarded by all as the matriarch of the company, looking after all the dancers' documents, allowances, touring needs—even *merienda* after every show or rehearsal.

Having seen the company grow from—literally—her own backyard, Ms Macuja has nothing but praise for her young wards. "Everybody at the festival was commending us about the discipline of the group. They practiced diligently every morning, whether they were performing or not. They were very polite and well behaved at all times, and even followed a dress code that made them look very smart and neat wherever they went. In fact, the head of the Romanian delegation told Osias and myself how much he wished his own dancers could be the same way. Our dancers left everyone the impression that Filipinos are very disciplined people."

Indeed, the hard work and dedication paid off, as Ballet Manila was met with wild applause and extended ovations in each of its seven performances.

"We all cried after our very first standing ovation," recalls demi-soloist Sofia Sangco, who has been with Ballet Manila for seven years. "It was the very first time we earned a standing ovation for the company without Ma'am Lisa or Sir Shaz. It meant so much to us that we can finally make our mentors proud of us by our own effort."

Now herself a teacher at the Ballet Manila school, Sangco says that what she appreciates most about her fellow dancers is their focus on dancing as a group and not as individuals. "*Nagsasayaw kami* as one, *hindi kanya-kanya*," she explains. "The rigid training is also very valuable to us because you

BALLET Manila demi-soloist Gerardo Francisco proudly carrying the Philippine flag during the opening ceremonies of the Aberdeen International Youth Festival 2004 at the Aberdeen Music Hall

can see the effect onstage—we move with clockwork precision, which the audience and critics can easily observe."

BM's newest demi-soloist, Gerardo Francisco, spent seven years dancing with other professional dance companies before joining the company in 2002. A native of Iloilo City, he has participated in various dance and music festivals since age 13 as a member of a folk-based theater and dance troupe. Imagine his surprise when, upon arrival at Aberdeen, he saw huge posters of himself in mid-air from the ballet, "Agila," hoisted along the streets leading to the festival site!

"Dancing with Ballet Manila has challenged me to top myself from day to day," he says. "The responsibility is greater in a big festival like this; especially since you are representing the whole country. We can't afford to relax... we're always motivated to do our very best at all times."

Ballet Manila's season production of "La Bayadere" is ongoing at the Aliw Theater at Star City until Sept. 26. It's another chance for the ballet company to shine and show their countrymen the kind of dance magic that has brought them honor and acclaim abroad.

Call 4043086, 5255967 or 5251584.

LISA Macuja-Elizalde as Nikiya and Maxim Chashchegorov as Solor in the full-length ballet "La Bayadere," ongoing until Sept. 26 at the Aliw Theater, Star City

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WATCH out for Aukeran, a Spanish group specializing in Basque traditional dances, in the Spanish cultural festival "Fiesta!".

Beyond flamenco

AUKERAN, a Spanish modern dance group, will be one of the main attractions during this October's "Fiesta: Spanish Festival for Culture and the Arts," organized annually by Instituto Cervantes.

For centuries, flamenco was typified and branded as The Spanish Dance, as if it was the only dance genre that existed in this Mediterranean country. Yet its cultural dance variety is as wide as its gastronomy, as each region has at least two or three traditional dances.

For this reason, Instituto Cervantes, the Spanish Cultural Center, is bringing to Manila Aukeran, a contemporary dance company from the Basque region.

"'Fiesta!,' now on its fourth year, has already gained a remarkable significance in the cultural arena of Manila," said Javier Galván, director of Instituto Cervantes.

"Every year, we try to give the Filipinos a wide array of Spanish cultural elements. As in the dance category, we feel that this year, we should break away from the stereotypes and invite to the country a contemporary dance group of great prestige and innovative capacity. And definitely, Aukeran is the group we're talking about."

In fact, Spain now counts on other big names in contemporary dance that are internationally popular such as Nacho Duato and his Compañía Nacional de Danza, Víctor Ullate, Cesc Gelabert, Chevy Muraday, Losdedae (who graced "Fiesta!" in 2002) and Aukeran.

Aukeran, formed in 1997, has performed widely in Spain and France. The group specializes in traditional dances and combines them with modern forms.

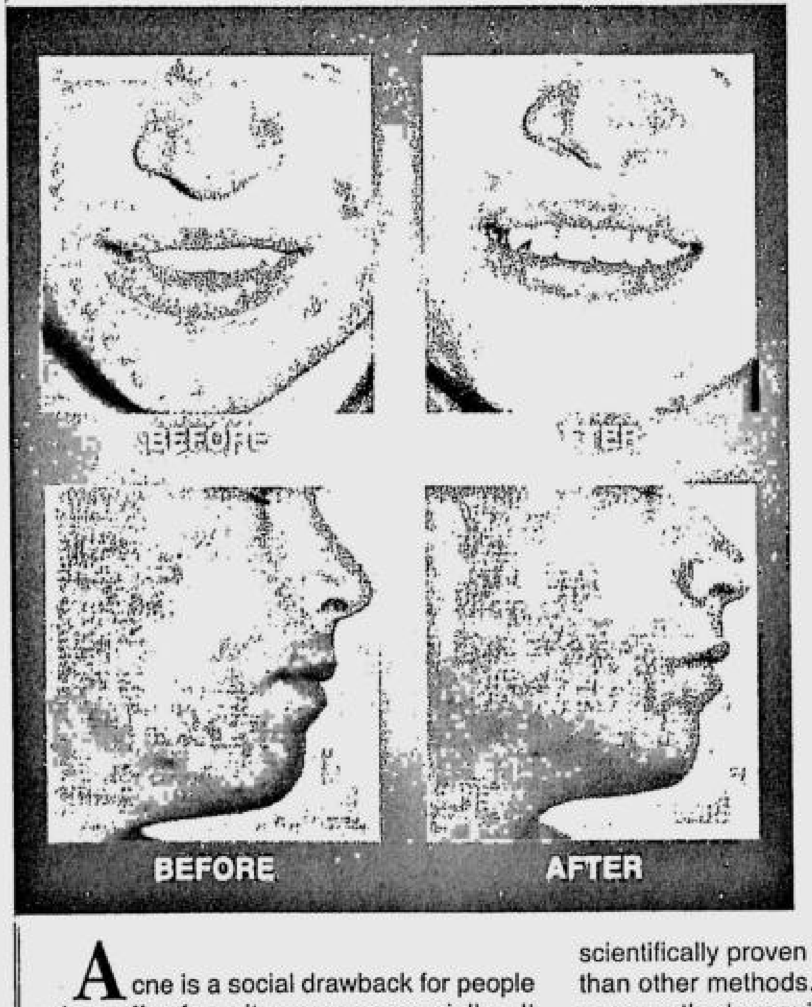
Edu Muruamendiaraz, its founder, director and one of its 10 dancers, said the job is not easy: "Contemporary dance is normally based on multiple body movements. The Basque traditional dances, on the other hand, only requires footwork, with the body torso kept erect. Hence, the fusion of the two requires a lot of dedication. The choreography must be designed ingeniously."

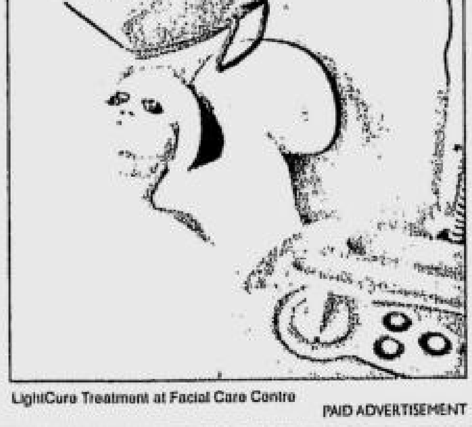
On Oct. 9, at the CCP Main Theater, Aukeran will be presenting "everything that has a name exists" (Todo lo que tiene nombre existe), a very rhythmic modern dance inspired by ancestral mythologies.

Aside from the 10 dancers, the musicians and their varied instruments will also be on stage. The company boasts of being one of the very few dance groups who perform regularly with live music.

Another highlight is the amazing light display that perfectly captures the body movements and intense footwork of the dancers.

Call 5261482 to 85 or visit http://manila.cervantes.es





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FDA-approved, LightCure Acne Therapy is scientifically proven to treat acne 3x faster than other methods. While old, traditional acne methods require painful injections or oral & topical medications to diminish acne formation, LightCure carefully selects the most accurate and effective wavelength of UV-free light for acne treatment. Safe and effective for all skin types, it decreases skin inflammation and has a long-lasting preventive effect without pigmentary changes and scarring.

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LightCure clearly makes the difference. Within only a month of treatment, it brings dramatic improvement to pimple-ridden or acne-tormented skin, without aftereffects. The treatment is simple, painless and has been proven very effective. Clients can sit or lie comfortably and listen to relaxing music, while undergoing treatment. It is endorsed and used by leading skin care clinics across five continents, demonstrating long-lasting success. LightCure have gained worldwide recognition and has become one of the most favorite beauty secrets of celebrities and models in the international scene.

LightCure is indeed the most advanced anti-acne treatment available today. So, if you are tired of seeing pimples on your face after trying old, ineffective methods, inquire with the Facial Care Centre professionals now about their LightCure Acne Therapy. Call

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